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Received 5 July, 1892.

HISTORICAL PORTRAITS.

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HISTORICAL PORTRAITS

OF

THE TUDOR DYNASTY AND THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

BY

S. HUBERT BURKE,

AUTHOR OF "THE MEN AND WOMEN OF THE REFORMATION."

"Time unveils all truth."

VOL. II.

C.
JOHN HODGES,

24, KING WILLIAM STREET, CHARING CROSS, W.C.

1880.

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Bright Land.

INTRODUCTION.

I INTENDED the present volume to conclude with the deaths of Queen Mary and Cardinal Pole ; but so many important incidents have come under my notice since the first volume was printed, that I found it impossible to carry out my original arrangements. This volume, therefore, ends with the death of Bishop Gardyner. The third volume will open with the Last Days of Archbishop Cranmer and the Religious Persecutions in the reign of Queen Mary.

With regard to the spelling of the names of two leading characters in the first volume, I have but one answer to make to the critic of an eminent London daily journal. I was advised by several of the highest literary authorities to retain the "nomination" which I have found in original documents—some from the hands of the men who had the best right to adopt their own nominal designation. I willingly submit to kind and erudite advice—not at all, as ascribed, dreaming of "affectation." I would now respectfully refer to other questions raised by my censors :

A literary journal which owes not a little of its present eminence to its historic name, has based the most adverse portion of a criticism upon some remarks in the preface to the first volume—which remarks were not the author's, but the opinions, in inverted commas, of a literary lady of high repute. This confusion, by a critic, of author and corre-

spondent, is, I have since perceived, not a novel circumstance, and cannot validate the claims of a journal to judicial weight, nor manifest a judicious perusal on the part of its critic.

It has been objected by the *Spectator*, the *Saturday Review*, and other journals, that I have used unbecoming epithets to Henry VIII. . I regret, for the credit of humanity, that the life of an English monarch should not deserve a more courteous delineation. When one writes with all the incidents of a drama before his mental view, he may, at a certain point, give utterance to an indignant expression that may not be justified by the special incident; but whether this be so in the case of King Henry or not, the reader can judge who will refer to the chapters in the first volume headed "The Fall of Anna Boleyn," pp. 385—418; and "The Queen's Death-Warrant Signed," p. 456: Henry's demeanour on the day of Anna's judicial murder; and, to crown all, his marriage with Jane Seymour whilst the blood of her predecessor was still warm on the block. I refer the reader also to Henry's instructions to Lord Hertford, in his campaign against Scotland, in April, 1544, for another proof of his "merciful disposition." The despatch in question is printed in the present volume, chap. xiii. p. 264. Sir Walter Raleigh, who possessed the friendship of Queen Elizabeth, writing in the reign of James I., described Henry VIII. as "the incarnation of human wickedness." Hallam, Mackintosh, and Macaulay, have used strong epithets in relation to Henry's actions as a monarch and as a man. Miss Strickland, also, in her "Queens of England," designates Henry a "regal ruffian," in alluding

to his conduct towards Anna Boleyn, and the learned lady has also the truthful temerity to style the "Defender of the Faith," as the "English Bluebeard." To the standard work—"The Archbishops of Canterbury"—of the late eminent Dean of Chichester, I make many references—mostly, I am compelled to say, of dissidence—but I fully agree with Dean Hook in what follows:—"If any one," he writes, "were in duty bound to expose the character of Henry VIII., an investigation of his conduct in the divorce case of Anne of Cleves would prove him *to be devoid of the common feelings of a gentleman, a Christian—a man. Perhaps there is not in historical literature a viler document than that in which he assigned his reasons for seeking a divorce. He cared not what he did or said, if only he could carry his object.*" Have the panegyrists of Henry ever seen this document? Yet there are letters of King Henry's extant equally infamous, but irrespective of matters of public interest like the one so justly denounced by Dean Hook. Another distinguished Protestant writer calls Henry VIII. a "monster;" and, knowing all we do *now know* of this evil being, to set him down under a natural designation would be an insult to humanity. A "ruffian" may have something human or redeeming in him; but the cruel, relentless, heartless, blasphemous, despotic voluptuary—nothing.

Superficial judgments are, it is to be feared, too frequently delivered in the process of book-reviewing, and the work of years—"laboriously and with great endeavour set down in honesty"—adjudicated upon, after a "skim" of a couple of hours, by the "ready pen" of some stray *littérateur*, whose

production, when once handed to his patron, lies amongst the "over matter," without hope of a remorseful retouch, rendered desirable by intervening perusal, but flung into the newspaper on the first contingency. Many authors can bear testimony to the truth of this statement.

In several "criticisms" may be found the rather inequitable fact of my being censured for opinions and epithets expressed and used by authorities noted at the bottoms of the respective pages in which they occur. But then I can derive comfort from the amusing essay of Sterne on similar critics, even if I should have reason to realize the sadly playful apophthegm (as to one of his characters) of the greatest English translator I have ever known of the German poets—"For critic-like he never read a book."

I know that it is not within human power to obtain unanimous assent from the perennial diversity of creeds and politics. Even my sincere effort to narrate events on all sides with thorough impartiality has not met with approval from many Catholics and Anglicans, as well as several sections of Dissent, yet no influence has once swayed me from the "noiseless tenour" of my way. I have suppressed no document useful to the cause of truth, far less misrepresented data. If, on my own part, I have fallen into errors of opinion or inference, I humbly regret it; but as to the facts set down, *they* need no defence, as they are invincible. An honourable historian will be as loyal to veracity as the chivalrous Crusader of old to the sacred object of his devotion.

Finally, it seems to me that with much aptness the words of the Roman poet—who, although in the aggregate, a sad *magister morum*, has transmitted to us many maxims

whose observance would befit any Christian gentleman—might be applied to describe the ideal of one who sets down the result of his researches with fearless fidelity, having regard solely to the eternal principles of Truth :—

“Justum et tenacem propositi virum
Non civium ardor prava jubentium,
Non vultus instantis tyranni
Mente quatit solida; neque Auster,
Dux inquieti turbidus Adriæ,
Nec fulminantis magna Jovis manus.
Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Impavidum ferient ruinæ.”

Again I must express my sincere and respectful acknowledgments to those clergy of the Anglican Church who, in the course of my literary inquiries, have afforded me opportunities of consulting MSS., documents, rare black-letter books, diaries, &c., in their possession.

I cheerfully assign to those who have in any way assisted me their full share of merit. To the officials of the literary department of the British Museum I would be more diffuse in my thanks, as they one and all deserve, did not long experience prove that courtesy, kindly attention, and delicate consideration seem to be such unavoidable attributes of the gentlemen who officiate in that important department of an unrivalled institution as to render an elaborate expression of individual gratitude superfluous.

In conclusion, I beg respectfully to inform the readers of the “*Historical Portraits of the Tudor Dynasty*,” that an index shall be attached to the last volume of the work.

S. H. BURKE.

LONDON, July, 1880.

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HISTORICAL PORTRAITS

OF

THE TUDOR DYNASTY AND THE REFORMATION PERIOD.

CHAPTER I.

THOMAS CRANMER.

THE current of events now brings me to the consideration of the life of Thomas Cranmer, the primal motor of England's change of ecclesiastical domination.

The family of Thomas Cranmer had been settled in Nottinghamshire from the period of the Norman Conquest. On the 2nd of July, 1489, Thomas Cranmer was born at Aslacton, in the parish of Whatton, in the county of Nottingham. He was the second son of Thomas and Mary Cranmer, and had an elder brother named Edward, and four sisters. With pious maternal feeling, Mrs. Cranmer intended her two sons for the priesthood, but her plans were for a time thwarted by circumstances. Thomas was sent by his father to a "severe schoolmaster, whose cruelty stupefied many of the pupils, and made them timid and fearful creatures for life, looking on books as the introduction to every trouble to them." Ralph Morrice states

that young Cranmer would never have recovered his natural manly feeling if he had not left his pedantic and cruel old master.*

"When at home," Maister Cranmer trained young Thomas to field sports, for which "Tom had a liking," and "excelled his father." "Throughout life," says Morrice, "Thomas would follow hawk and hound; and although short-sighted, he could take a good aim with the long bow. When he became Archbishop of Canterbury, the game was carefully preserved on his manors, in order that he might the better enjoy the sport. He was a bold and skilful horseman; and in after life he was ready to mount the horse which no groom in his stables could manage." Such is the picture drawn by one who was many years in daily intercourse with Maister Cranmer.

The death of Cranmer, the elder, caused some changes in the family. Young Thomas, then in his fourteenth year, was sent by his good mother to Cambridge; and there he became a member of Jesus College, to which he was attached for many years afterwards.

Nothing is recorded of Cranmer's early life at the University. He does not seem to have "mixed with the wild and boisterous students," but to have kept closely to his studies. No record of impropriety against him has been found, and, at regulated times, he corresponded with his family, to whom he is said to have been devotedly

* Ralph Morrice's *Anecdotes of Archbishop Cranmer*. In Knight's *Life of Collet* and in the *Letters of Erasmus* are to be found some narrations of the "cruel and savage actions" of schoolmasters, who, by their treatment of pupils, indurated the hearts of their alumni to the sufferings of those afterwards subjected to those pupils' power.

attached. Although his mother wished him to become a priest, his tastes and studies were, like those of Wolsey, directed to civil law. For the quarter of a century during which he was resident in Cambridge, the name of Thomas Cranmer does not appear on the rolls of the University.* From the Letters of Erasmus may be judged the characters of many of his contemporaries; but, though Cranmer lived almost in the same street as the great Dutch scholar, the latter makes no mention of him. Erasmus had occasion to thank Cranmer, when the latter became an archbishop, for some favour conferred upon him; but no allusion is made to any former knowledge of each other when both had been resident in the same University. Cranmer has been set down as one of the best writers of pure English of his time; yet, as a translator from the classics, he never ranked among men of learning. It is strange to say that such a man continued throughout his whole career, as even his monarch and contemporaries averred, very ignorant of history, whilst his school-fellow, Stephen Gardynner, had scarcely a rival in historical knowledge within the walls of Cambridge. Cranmer's taste was decidedly for the law. Dean Hook thinks that, if he "intended to become a priest, he would scarcely have married." Through perseverance and hard work, the law student became a Fellow of Jesus College in 1510-11.† In taking this office, he subscribed to the usual vows of celibacy. At this time he was on friendly terms with the family who owned the Dolphin

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi.

† This College was founded by John Alcock, successively Bishop of Rochester, Worcester, and Ely. He was a prelate distinguished for his love of learning and of learned men. Dr. Alcock was Lord Chancellor of England in the reign of Edward the Fourth. He died in 1500. Bale, who wrote about half a

Tavern, which was much frequented by the alumni of the University. Stephen Gardiner was amongst the students who dined and supped at this hostelry; and Bonner and Edward Fox lodged there at times. Bonner was styled the "noisy boy," and Cranmer "silent Tom."

Whether Cranmer's courtship with the innkeeper's niece was before or after he made vows of celibacy, it is now impossible to ascertain. He was discovered to be married when a fellow of the College, and was cited before the University authorities. Here he is said to have "acknowledged that he had violated his vows, and was then a married man." At this time, he was twenty-seven years of age. He was expelled from the University, as a matter of course, and looked upon as "a bad man;" many persons then considered that it was fortunate he had not been ordained a priest. Those who still would befriend him, however, were of opinion that, as "a College gentleman, he degraded himself by marrying the barmaid of an inn;" and others, who alleged that "Joan, with the dark eyes and black hair," had a virtuous reputation, sympathised with him when they heard of the match "being the pure temptations of a first love." Before the expiration of a year Cranmer was a widower, his wife having died in child-birth. There is a great amount of mystery connected with this asserted marriage of his with "Black Joan."

After the death of his reputed wife, Cranmer repaired to Aslacton, where he received a "cold reception from his

century after this prelate's death, describes him as "so devoted from childhood to learning and piety, growing from grace to grace, that no one throughout England was more renowned for his sanctity." This statement is endorsed by Fuller, Coke, and Godwin.

kindred and friends." For some months he "appeared in a state of grief for the loss he had sustained, refusing even to join in his favourite amusement of the chase." He now resolved to pursue his studies for the priesthood; and with some family interest, aided by a "penitential petition," he was re-admitted to his fellowship in Jesus College, renewing all his former vows. He then recurred to the study of Divinity, and "became a model," as Strype states, "of propriety, goodness, and piety to the young gentlemen who were placed under his charge." "He was," writes Father Ambrose, "the first in the chapel every morning, and the last to leave it." He commanded the respect of his superiors in the University; yet he never succeeded in gaining the goodwill of the students, whilst he seemed scarcely to be known to the inhabitants of Cambridge. From a natural hesitation on the part of the episcopacy, Cranmer was not ordained a priest until 1523, being then in his thirty-ninth year. It is an unpleasant task to trace the history of such a man; but I cannot shrink from the duty I have undertaken. Unfortunately, at the seats of learning, patronage had begun to make inroads on the footsteps of bequests, and lay influence, through personal complications, was already working evil in matters with which it should have had no concern.

For years after Cranmer's ordination he remained unnoticed by any of the prominent divines or scholars of the time. He filled several offices in the University with sufficient credit to himself, but he never attained distinction as a scholar or an orator, although few doubted his astuteness. He happened, however, to be one of the best Latin scholars at the time extant at Cambridge. Cranmer's

appointment to the office of a public examiner in the Divinity School may be regarded as a recognition of his theological knowledge; yet it has been very positively affirmed that he was deficient in this critical branch of sacred learning. Be this as it may, he discharged the duties of his office to the satisfaction of his superiors, and is said to have been "severe and strict, yet mild in enforcing discipline."

"At this time," says a contemporary, "Father Cranmer looked oldish; he was of dark complexion, with a long beard, half grey; part of his head had no hair; he spoke little; his amusement, at times, was chess. He was accounted an admirable hand at that game, which he enjoyed very much. His habits were temperate, and he frequently admonished young gentlemen 'for indulging in the use of strong liquors,'—a vice then making progress amongst the students of Cambridge.

"Father Cranmer was reckoned a good horseman, and, like most early risers, was much given to walking on a summer's morning; his manners were cold and disdainful, unless to those to whom he considered it his interest to be the reverse. He seems to have had no desire for the society of educated women. I must state, however, that he had no opportunity of meeting them. 'Black Joan,' as his wife was styled from her hair and complexion, was a woman of no education—a peasant girl from a neighbouring farm. During the long years Thomas Cranmer was attached to Cambridge he had many acquaintances, but was never known to have formed what might be called a friendship for any fellow-student."*

* The above letter of John Alcock, "student," is modernised and abbreviated. Alcock was a contemporary of Cranmer's and a chess-player at the Dolphin.

CHAPTER II.

CRANMER AS THE KING'S THEOLOGIAN.

FROM the many authorities I have consulted as to Dr. Cranmer's first interview with King Henry, I select that of Dean Hook as the most correct :—

“A quarter of a century had passed away (says Dean Hook) since Cranmer's matriculation, and still he continued to be what we should now call a private tutor. He had under his care two young men who were, through their mother, related to himself. In 1528 the sweating sickness reappeared in the country, and committed havoc among the Colleges of Cambridge. Dr. Cranmer, accompanied by his pupils, went to the house of their father, near Waltham. In the neighbourhood of Waltham the King had now fixed his abode. Alarmed at the death of two gentlemen of his Privy Chamber, and others among his courtiers, who, having sickened in the morning, were before sunset dead men, Henry had wandered from place to place, his temporary and lonely residence being indicated by fires lighted day and night, both to purify the atmosphere and to warn off intruders. But now the fierceness of the pestilence having abated, and his alarm being less exaggerated, he was settled at Tytynhanger, a house belonging to the Abbot of St. Alban's. Although public business had been at first suspended, and even the great subject which had occupied the minds of men (the divorce) had ceased for a time to be discussed, the King now began to direct his attention to State affairs, and summoned his Ministers to an occasional interview. They were, so to say, billeted upon the neighbouring monasteries and gentlemen's houses. Persons engaged on the King's business were able to command all services, and to make themselves at home in every house. At Mr. Cresci's hospitable mansion, Dr. Cranmer met two great men—namely, Dr. Gardynier, the Secretary of State, and Dr. Edward Fox, the King's Grand Almoner; the former historically known as Bishop

Gardynere, from his subsequent elevation to the See of Winchester ; and the latter in the course of time becoming the Bishop of Hereford.* The divorce question became a subject of conversation, and Dr. Cranmer freely stated his opinion. Such contradictory statements have been made with reference to Cranmer's opinion upon the divorce question that it is not easy, at first sight, to understand what his opinion really was. The view taken by Cranmer appears to me to be perfectly intelligible, and he adhered to it consistently from first to last. All parties were agreed at that time that, although the Pope could grant a dispensation to supersede, for a particular occasion and purpose, a law of the Church, no Papal dispensation could *extend to a law of God*. The question therefore to be first decided was this—whether the law of God prohibited a marriage with a deceased brother's wife. It is sometimes supposed that Cranmer suggested that this point should be submitted to the judgment of the canonists and the Universities ; but it is almost, if not quite certain, that this measure had been resolved upon some time before Cranmer came on the scene.† The question, therefore, was, what steps should be taken in the event of the judgment of the canonists and Universities being in the affirmative.

"Gardynere, Bonner, and men of that school (continues Dean Hook), would reply : '*Clement must be coerced to give a righteous judgment.*' . . . They held that the Pope ought to decide in favour of the King—that he should even be compelled to do so : but until the Papal judgment was officially given, the King might not marry again."‡

After entering into a disquisition, according to canon law, as to the question at issue, Dean Hook returns to the party assembled at Mr. Cresci's. When the party separated, Cranmer returned to his ordinary pursuits and the superintendence of his pupils.

* Parker ; Ralph Morrice ; Strype's *Memorials* ; Jenkyns.

† Cavendish ascribes to Wolsey the suggestion of a reference to the Universities, and Fiddes held the same opinion. Fiddes' *Wolsey*, p. 444.

‡ Gardynere and Bonner, however, altered their opinion, or action, as the reader has already seen, at Dunstable.

Of the conversation between himself and Gardynier perhaps he thought no more, although he may have looked back with satisfaction to the honour he had received in being admitted to the society of men so eminent in station as were the Secretary of State and the Grand Almoner of the King. It was, however, with surprise that, soon after Cranmer's return to Cambridge, he received a summons to wait upon the King's highness at Greenwich.

"It appeared afterwards (quoting Dean Hook) that in the course of some discussion with the King on the divorce case, the opinion of Dr. Cranmer was mentioned either by Stephen Gardynier or by Edward Fox. Of Cranmer the King had never heard, not even the name, but the acuteness of his judgment was immediately recognised by the quick sagacity of Henry, who exclaimed, 'Who is this Dr. Cranmer?—where is he? Is he still at Waltham? Marry, I will speak to him; let him be sent for out of hand. This man, I trow, has got the right sow by the ear.' A mandate from Henry was not to be disobeyed. A few civil words uttered by royal lips have such a magic influence on a large class of minds that royalty ought always to be popular, and Cranmer's was the sort of mind to be enamoured by royal condescension and kindness. The King *penetrated the character of the man at once*. He spoke to him of *what he called his conscience*; and, forgetting that his Queen had a conscience too, he desired to be relieved from the burden by which he imagined himself to be distressed and perplexed. He had been informed that Cranmer had devised a plan by which he might be extricated from his difficulties, and he prayed him as a favour to devote himself to the cause. Cranmer showed some reluctance to withdraw himself from literary pursuits, and to become the leading counsel in the pending lawsuit, for this, in fact, was the King's proposal. This is apparent from the tone which King Henry now assumed. 'Maister Doctor,' said he, 'I pray you; and nevertheless, because you are a subject, I charge and command you, all other business and affairs set apart, to take some pains in this my cause to be furthered by your devices, so that I may shortly understand whereunto I may trust.' Upon Cranmer the task was

now imposed of placing his argument on paper. He was enjoined to produce a treatise in which he was to be supported by the authority of Holy Scripture, of the General Councils, and of the Fathers. And now might Cranmer truly say: 'A change came o'er the spirit of my dream.' He is no longer writing in a dull, cold chamber, looking out on a darker quadrangle, or in a public library, where neither candle nor fire was permitted, but in the fine library of the Earl of Wiltshire, at Durham House,* looking down upon the great thoroughfare of London, crowded with boats and barges of every description and size. The student had now become a courtier. Henry had reasons of his own for not lodging Cranmer at Greenwich, where, though the Queen still lived, Anna Boleyn was the ruler, and ruled like a despot.† The King commended Cranmer to the hospitality of Anna's father, the Earl of Wiltshire; a father not being then known as one of the basest of men. Here Cranmer was a sufficient distance from the royal residence, and, at the same time, near enough to admit of frequent conferences with the King. That such conferences took place is shown by the speech which Henry was reported to have made, to the effect that there was *no difficulty which he was not ready to encounter if he had only Thomas Cranmer at his elbow.*"‡

Cranmer's star was now in the ascendant. The unknown Cambridge student suddenly became a royal chaplain; the Archdeaconship of Taunton and other livings were conferred upon him—the recipient taking the emoluments,

* The Adelphi, in the Strand, now occupies the site of the then Durham House. In the reign of Henry VII. the Infanta Katharine resided in this mansion.

† I must dissent, with regret, from the learned Dean, as to the above passage. Anna Boleyn was incapable of acting in the spirit described. Many of the actions attributed to her during the divorce litigation were those of her base father and her aunts. Her position at this juncture was the saddest that can be imagined. Her father forced her step by step, till at last, with a fainting heart, she surrendered her stainless honour. The recollection of her early religious training caused a long and painful struggle with conscience—a feeling which Anna Boleyn's new spiritual guide was never able to remove.

‡ *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. pp. 435-441.

but performing no duties. He became the caressed friend of the Boleyns, the Suffolks, and the Clintons—and in fact of all those courtiers who wished to insult and injure Queen Katharine. When Dr. Cranmer presented his treatise on the "Marriage Question" to the King, Henry asked him if he could maintain his views in Rome, if sent thither. He replied that he was ready to go there and argue the question with any canonists put forward by the Pontiff. His chief argument was, that "the King's marriage with his deceased brother's wife was not merely voidable, but *ab initio* void."

In the treatise above mentioned, Cranmer endeavoured to uphold his case by a reference to some obsolete theories which were directly opposed to his subsequent opinions as a follower of Zwingli, whose tenets are so well known for their dissidence from those of the Catholic Church. He had, however, a lively sense of the importance of promoting his sovereign's schemes for another marriage. There is now reason to believe that the book on the "Marriage Question" was the joint production of Stephen Gardiner, Edward Fox, and Cranmer. If the book possess any merit for theological learning, that portion does not belong to Cranmer, who was specially ignorant, as before noted, of theology. Pending the divorce between Henry and Katharine, he was commanded by the King to discuss the merits of the question with Sir Thomas More, on which occasion Cranmer exhibited unsatisfactory acquaintance with any canon law on which to base his plea against Katharine. Even the pretences he adopted failed in subtlety, and, as the correspondence advanced, his arguments, fraught with specious assumptions, became weak and contradictory, and were finally dissipated by

the potent theological reasoning and open-hearted eloquence of the good Chancellor.*

Cranmer repaired to Oxford and Cambridge to argue the question of his treatise,† and was there sustained in all his sophistry by Stephen Gardiner and Edward Fox, who appeared there at the "Royal command." As the patronage of the Crown was at the disposal of these prelates, they made some converts to the royal will. An embassy to Rome was next arranged, and the Earl of Wiltshire was appointed head of the Commission.‡ Amongst the High Commissioners were Gardiner, Cranmer, Lee, Edward Fox, Bonner, and other ecclesiastics, supplemented by the King's private agent—Sir Gregorie Cassali, a personage whose liability or proclivity for unduly stating facts, and a concurrent capability for performing his master's behests, are now fully ascertainable. The proceedings at Rome were conducted in a mode suited to the motive of the occasion. The conduct of the Commissioners could not but fail to impress the Pontiff with the kind intentions of the King, seeing, as he did, the scant courtesy of his representatives. Cranmer, nevertheless, was an exception to this lack of respect. His "fresh winning semblance of heart" gained the confidence of Pope Clement, whilst he won the Pontiff's esteem by his respectful bearing and the moderation which marked his every movement. Cranmer, after

* See Roper's *Life of More*; also Pomeroy, Heylin, Strype, Burnet, and Collier.

† Cranmer's treatise on the divorce is said to be lost; but many bookworms think, with Dean Hook, that it is probably amongst, or beneath, ponderous piles of literary *adversaria* in the British Museum.

‡ In the first volume of this work, I have referred to the commission above named in the chapter upon the "Royal Scruples."

spending some weeks at Rome, took leave of the Pontiff "in special kindness," but remained on the Continent for more than a year—on the "King's business," as it has been averred. As to the proceedings in which he may have been engaged for his royal master at this particular period there is little reliable known, unless it can be ascertained in the ultimate results of his policy. He may have had personal notions antagonistic in their elements to divorce, or he may have been essaying to impress on Universities, never unassailable to gold, that the *angels** themselves were on the side of his employer in his outrage on the Queen.

It has been contended that Cranmer's multitudinous tergiversations had their birth in the weakness of his character. A feeble excuse this to the most confiding of hero-worshippers. A close examination of his career will result in a conviction that the anomalies in Thomas Cranmer's conduct derived their origin from an utter and soulless want of principle. The man endeavoured to fashion himself to the times; his disposition was naturally stern and unbending, but "pliable as a reed at the breeze of interest." When despatched to Rome on the mission about Henry's divorce, as above remarked, he won upon the Pope and his advisers; for, notwithstanding the cynicisms of all "philosophers," from Voltaire to this day, there are laymen even virtuous, trusting, and unsophisticated. By his expressed horror of "loose ecclesiastics" and laboured demonstrations of piety, Cranmer deceived the ruler of the

* "Golden angels were more in favour with Henry than the Rose nobles with his Plantagenet predecessors."

Vatican, who conferred upon him the high clerical dignity of "Penitentiary-General of England."*

There was brief time for rejoicing in this new dignity of Thomas Cranmer. Literally he ignored the Church in his passage home through Germany, where, we find, he "suddenly"—if not "incontinently," as the olden synonym of the word might perhaps be used—became acquainted with the niece of Osiander, a name not unknown in the mediæval religious tumults of Germany; and, after a few weeks' "conversance" or acquaintance, Dr. Cranmer married the relative of the Teutonic Reformer. Dean Hook's defence of Dr. Cranmer's desertion of clerical vows seems here a reluctant task, for he writes:—"Dr. Cranmer *lingered* in Germany for some months, and had no desire to hasten his return to England. He was not engaged in theological discussions, and the German divines were politically, as well as on spiritual grounds, opposed to any public proceedings of the Grand Penitentiary of England."

The learned Dean then proceeds to describe Osiander:—"With one man only could Cranmer sympathise. Osiander, like himself, was an enthusiastic student of Scripture, and was eminent as a critic of the Greek Testament.† Both of them were discontented with the existing state of things: they saw the necessity of reform, but could neither of them, at that time, decide what the reform ought to be.

* Some of the duties conferred by this office were that of granting Papal dispensations, for which the archbishop received considerable fees. The office was considered one of great importance, and only conferred on men "most devoted to the Catholic Church."—(Fuller, Collier, Heylin, and Ranke.)

† The name of Osiander was assumed by Andrew Hozeman, in accordance with a custom which greatly prevailed at the period amongst literary men in Germany.

Neither of them was a Papist, and both were not Protestants. Osiander feared and disliked Luther, and he tyrannised over Melancthon. His mind was in sympathy with no one. He was a self-opinionated man, who entertained such singular notions on theological subjects that, as Mosheim remarks, it is easier to say what he did not, than what he *did* believe."

Dean Hook then proceeds to Cranmer's marriage:—"But it was not by the learning that Cranmer was detained in Germany; the bright eyes and sweet temper of Osiander's niece had made an impression upon the susceptible heart of Thomas Cranmer, who, having recovered from the loss of *his Joan, was passionately in love with the fair Marguerite*.* They married; and this marriage may be accepted to corroborate Cranmer's own statement, that he never sought, desired, nor expected the Primacy of the English Church." Dean Hook seems to consider that the King's command to Cranmer to accept the Primacy should be regarded as "imperative." But did not Cranmer know in his own heart that by the fact of his having broken his vows of celibacy in the first instance with Joan; and, secondly, having superadded perjury when, as priest and "Grand Penitentiary," wedding the German *fraulein*, he had utterly disqualified himself for the least prominent offices of the Church, not to speak of the Primacy? Yet, when he came to England, he was informed that he *had been* appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. Did he exclaim—with the ingenuous Portuguese divine—"Nolo episcopari?" By no

* The bride was seventeen years of age—her clerical bridegroom some forty-nine.

means. All had been arranged: the noble Wareham had just died, worn out with good labours; and the Primatial See was to be the reward of the man who was ready to give religious semblance to an act of iniquity which his virtuous predecessor ever denounced—the divorce of Katharine.

Concluding this interesting phase of Cranmer's career, Dean Hook remarks:—"Whatever might be the insults to which they might be subjected, Cranmer and *his* Marguerite *determined not to part*. He sent her before him to England, there to provide a home for herself, preparatory to *future arrangements, which would depend upon circumstances*."*

What is the meaning of this passage? Let the reader take the first of the two foregoing sentences. If Cranmer did not know that he was offending against the established belief, law, and sentiment, in breaking his vows and clandestinely allying himself to a German wife, why fear insults in England? In the second sentence Dean Hook admits an evil forethought on the part of the new archbishop which argues little for his manliness. If Cranmer did not believe that he would not prove useful to Henry, as Luther had been malleable to the polygamous Philip of Hesse, he dared not thus have treated Marguerite as his *leman*—to "depend upon circumstances." When subsequent "circumstances" rendered Cranmer not altogether so necessary to Henry, the Six Acts interfered with Marguerite's residence in Lambeth Palace, and she was compelled to depart for Germany.

On Cranmer's return to England, he was invested in "all the prouderie of State," with his new Quirinal paraphernalia,

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 450.

and unhesitatingly took the oaths and vows which the canon laws demanded, and which he accepted, to be as freely violated as they were readily received.* Just before the consecration ceremony Dr. Cranmer privately protested, before four witnesses and a notary, that by the oath of obedience to the Pope, which, for form's sake, he should be obliged to take, he did not intend to do anything prejudicial to the rights of the King or prohibitory of such reforms as "he might judge useful to the Church of England."† In this protest he violated both conscience and honesty. It was his object to clothe the ceremonial with all the canonical forms, but at the same time to conceal his own purposes from the public. After reading this "protest" to his five obsequious witnesses, Cranmer proceeded to the steps of the high altar at St. Stephen's, Westminster, and, having declared to those "same five persons" that he adhered to the "protest" he had already made, *he took the pontifical oath!* The "consecration" followed, after which, having again reminded the same five individuals of his previous "protest," *he took the oath a second time*, and was then solemnly inducted into his honours by the Papal delegates! Dean Hook, after a long and feeble defence of Cranmer in this matter, states that he took the oaths as a *mere form*, and that they had "*long since become obsolete!*" If so, the laws of God, of virtue, and of honour had likewise become obsolete. As I have remarked in the first volume, the appointment of Cranmer to the See of Canterbury at this particular time, was a most marked instance of an Archbishop being

* Herbert, in Kennet, p. 219; Strype's Memorials; Hume, vol. iii. p. 232 (folio edit.); Lingard, vol. iv.; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi.

† Lambeth MSS. (1136).

nominated almost *exclusively* by the Crown. The appointment was unpopular with all parties. "It was well known," writes Dean Hook, "that Cranmer was created Archbishop to facilitate the divorce of Queen Katharine." Therefore, the object for which the King appointed Cranmer is quite patent to posterity, and must be characterised as a convention involving patronage and unquestioning subservience.

Many of the German Reformers were hostile to the proposed divorce, and some of their distinguished men declared it a "heinous sin against justice and morality." It has been contended, however, that the German Reformers were influenced by the Emperor Charles. No doubt they were to some extent; but it is still more certain that the Emperor or the King of England could have purchased the support or advocacy of any of the numerous German Princes, or of the Reformers. All in the Teuton land seemed vendible at the time, temporally or spiritually. Melancthon, however, although it may seem strange, pronounced in favour of Queen Katharine:—"As to myself," he writes, "I will have nothing to do with the business. If any one recommends a divorce, he shall perform his part without me."* Such was the opinion expressed by a cherished friend of Cranmer.

But Cranmer, as previously intimated, did not employ all his time in love or controversy, but tried how far English gold might prove successful in the designs of his master. Rawdon Browne's "Venetian State Papers," and Cranmer's own letters, now prove that the Cambridge professor was the main agent in bribing foreign Universities to give favourable opinions on the divorce question. The more these

* Melancthon's Zurich Letters.

State Papers are examined, the worse appears the conduct of King Henry's Archbishop.

Dean Hook approaches the question of the "bribery to procure opinions" on the divorce of Katharine with evident unwillingness ; yet he admits sufficient to manifest his belief in Cranmer's want of integrity. "How far," he observes, "Cranmer was mixed up in those measures by which men were bribed, coerced, or cajoled, it is impossible to say. We know, however, that he had now entered into the cause with all the fervour of a partisan ; and I fear that he considered *no means to be unlawful which was conducive to the end which he had at heart.*"* An important admission.

Dean Hook's opinion of the learning and morality of Cranmer, in his character of judge at this epoch, is strikingly true. "No words," he says, "can be adduced more condemnatory of the conduct of Cranmer on this occasion. It is admitted that he was simulating the character of a just judge, when he had deliberately come to deliver an *iniquitous judgment ; but he seems never to have been conscience-stricken for his conduct on this matter. . . . Cranmer did not with his own eyes behold the weeping, praying, dying, injured woman, who was born a Princess of the mightiest empire in the world ; had for a quarter of a century lived an honest wife, a courageous Queen, and a pious Christian ; and was now to regard herself as a cast-off concubine, and her daughter—her only surviving child—as a bastard. Cranmer saw her not : he had scarcely ever seen her, and his was not a vivid imagination to depict the sorrows of her heart.*"† The learned Dean further describes party

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. p. 446.

† *Ibid.* vol. vii.

feeling on this subject as that of a half infidel and Puritan faction, "who defamed the saint and canonised the harlot."

Even Mr. Froude disapproves of the bearing of his hero at the time of the divorce. "It might," says Mr. Froude, "be supposed that to a person like Cranmer, the Court at Dunstable, the coronation of the new Queen, and the past out of which these things had risen, and the future which they threatened to involve, would have secured at least serious reflection; and that, engaged as he had been as a chief actor in a matter which, if it had done nothing else, had broken the heart of a high-born lady, whom once he had honoured as his Queen, he would have been either silent about his exploits, or if he had spoken of them, would not have spoken without some show of emotion. We look for a symptom of feeling, but we do not find it. When the coronation festivities were over, the Archbishop wrote to his friends an account of what had been done by himself and by others, in a light gossiping tone of easiest content It is disappointing."*

The reader has already seen what took place at Dunstable; but it is sometimes necessary to recur to those proceedings in order to collect the links in the chain of evidence involving the chief actor. Gervase Markham, Prior of Dunstable, welcomed Cranmer and the other prelates who came thither on their malign mission. Markham, as the friend of Cranmer, was the obedient servant of Cranmer's master; but the monks of Dunstable were not the credulous and unobservant inferiors of Prior Markham. "The monks had a bad opinion of Markham; he was

* Froude's *England*, vol. i. p. 458.

worldly-minded, and some of them even questioned his morality.”* The part Cranmer desired Markham to perform was, to give a religious solemnity to the divorce trial; and he and the other prelates held the court in the chapel of “Our Lady,” attached to the Abbey Church. The proceedings opened with a procession to the high altar, where Mass was celebrated, Cranmer being the celebrant, several other bishops assisting in the ceremonies. Gardyner’s despatches dwell upon the solemnity with which the Primate sang the Mass, and how all the olden ceremonies were observed.

Two hours later the court opened for the adjudication of the Queen’s case, when religion was again invoked “anterior to proceeding”—for the attempt to consecrate injustice in the semblance of religion was still a compliance unavoidable by men who, fearing the anger of their King, and knowing the feelings of the people, betrayed the cause of both religion and equity by doing direful wrong to a noble woman. Gardyner and Bonner acted on the occasion as assessors to Cranmer, and, of course, concurred in his previously formalised decision.†

The opinion of Dean Hook as to Archbishop Cranmer will be of far more importance in “years to come” than it may be considered now.

The Dean writes :—

“That there was collusion between the King and the Archbishop is proved by two letters written by Cranmer for the ‘licence to act.’ Both letters are at present in existence—both in Cranmer’s handwriting; both bear the marks of having been folded,

* Dugdale, vol. i.; State Papers, vol. i. p. 394; Pomeroy, Harpsfield, and Thorndale.

† State Papers on the Divorce Question; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi.

sealed, and reviewed by the King: that is to say, the King was *to be consulted as to the letter which was to be addressed to himself*. With the first, apparently, he (Cranmer) was not well satisfied. Cranmer, in the extreme servility with which he wrote, overstrained his point in the first of the two letters. It is difficult to see any real difference between them, though I think Dr. Lingard is right when he says: 'The King's object was to compel Cranmer to take the whole responsibility upon himself.' **

To even a blinded partisan this phase of Archbishop Cranmer's life must appear incompatible with his hitherto accepted virtues amongst the clerical statesmen of the day. Yet he was not *then*—and perhaps never intended to be—the establisher of a new religion; but, at this time, at all events, he acted merely as the Episcopal Prime Minister of King Henry.

It is stated by Dean Hook that Cranmer had no influence with Lord Cromwell to check the cruelty and dishonesty of his policy. Strype holds the opposite opinion. I find, however, by reference to Lingard, that at the period the Countess of Salisbury and other notables were condemned to death Cranmer and Cromwell reigned without control in the King's councils.† These allegations and many others are fully corroborated by papers discovered within the last thirty years. It is no grateful task to pursue this lamentable historical investigation; but the truth must no longer be concealed.

Scarcely three years had elapsed when Cranmer gave another judgment, declaring that the marriage between King Henry and Anna Boleyn "was, and always had been,

* Lingard, vol. v. p. 62.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, note on vol. vi. p. 468.

null and void." Cranmer gave this "*judgment standing, with hands uplifted to Heaven, a manner of awful solemnity ;*" "*invoking the name of God the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.*"* Edward Hall, the historian, was present.

It has been stated by Turner and other writers that Lord Crumwell, as the King's "Vicar-General," pronounced the sentence ; but as Pomeroy was a contemporary, and probably present, I prefer the evidence of his small black-letter book, and accept his identification of Cranmer. Later researches prove that Crumwell was *not* present, having retired from a sudden illness.†

To regard the "conscientious scruples" and the "strict adherence to law" assumed in these proceedings as other than transparent falsehood and hypocrisy, would shame the shallowest intellect : nevertheless, English historians of good repute have defended those transactions on what they designate "moral and political considerations." Why, morality had been hopelessly wrecked by the injustice done to Queen Katharine, and even Cranmer ought to have been ashamed to desecrate virtue by an assumption of its cloak !

Rapin defends Cranmer's conduct in the divorce of Anna Boleyn, by stating that he was "forced to pronounce the decree." By whom was he forced to give this judgment ? On the 17th of May, 1536, the Archbishop declared in his "spiritual judgment" that Anna was *never married* to the King, although she was condemned to death for adultery committed by her as Queen Consort of England, and executed two days later. Again, I refer to the important

* Pomeroy's Chronicle.

† Despatches of the Venetian Ambassador ; English State Papers (Domestic), 1536.

statements of Alesse and Burnet.* Both have expressed the opinion that, whilst Cranmer pronounced the decree against Anna Boleyn, "*he believed his own judgment against her to have been false, and that she was innocent.*" "The Archbishop of Canterbury," observes Lingard, "had formerly dissolved the marriage between Henry and Katharine; he was now required to dissolve that between Henry and Anna. It must have been a most unwelcome and painful task. He had examined that marriage juridically; had pronounced it good and valid, and had confirmed it by his authority as Metropolitan and judge; but to hesitate would have cost him his head. He acceded to the proposal with all the zeal of a proselyte, and, adopting as his own objections to its validity with which he had been furnished, sent copies of them to both the King and Queen 'for the salvation of their souls,' and the due effect of law; with a summons to each to appear in his court, and to show cause why a sentence of divorce should not be pronounced."†

Never, perhaps, was there a more solemn mockery of the forms of justice than in the pretended trial of this cause.

According to an unpublished paper in the Cottonian Library, Dr. Cranmer argued ably to show that Mary Boleyn had been a mistress to the King, and consequently there arose a "canonical impediment" to the marriage of Anna with the monarch. Cranmer's judgment, however, does not agree with the paper in question. It is clear that

* Alesse appears in the first volume of this work as an important witness concerning Cranmer's conduct to Anna Boleyn at the period of her trial and condemnation. Alesse being "an inveterate gossip," I should not accept his relations, but that they are certified by other contemporaries, such as the Venetian diplomatic representatives.

† Lingard, vol. v. pp. 72, 73.

the Archbishop believed the Queen innocent; but the royal pleasure demanded her life, and, without further protest, Cranmer withdrew his canon law arguments in favour of his royal mistress.

A very artful letter of Cranmer to the King on this divorce question has been printed by Burnet, which, when closely sifted, proves that the Archbishop could descend to any scheme to sustain his position.* The Prelate who pronounced those contradictory opinions upon questions involving such moral and social interests as the separation of those "whom God hath joined together," has been described as the "friend and confessor" of Anna Boleyn. Burnet, in an apparently earnest tone, states that the Archbishop was "much afflicted at pronouncing against the Queen." A statement like this is worthy of Gilbert Burnet. Cranmer never permitted sentiment to supersede interest, and the Archbishop was so far Anna's friend as he was permitted to partake of the sunshine; but when her fortunes were in shadow, he kept aloof from the darkened circle, and at any cost stood within the light. Under the best condition of her fortune Cranmer was merely Anna's political friend, and the extent of his amity was graduated by circumstances. The amount of his devotion to Anna Boleyn was equivalent to that manifested at a subsequent period by Sir William Cecil to his own patron, the Duke of Somerset. The friendship of Dr. Cranmer for the mother of our great Protestant Queen was a sentiment convertible with his own interest—the plausible profession of a courtier, who refused even the mercy of silent ingratitude to the great misfortune which, when the day of sorrow came, struck

* Burnet, vol. i. p. 200.

down his alleged friend and patroness.* Sir James Mackintosh, a great admirer of Cranmer, describes him at the time of his giving judgment in the case of Anna Boleyn as "the most unhappy or the most abject of men." Dean Hook, at the conclusion of a review of the King's and Cranmer's conduct towards Anna Boleyn, in the case of her divorce, concludes in these words:—"The whole is a sad story, from whatever point of view we regard it; and of Cranmer's conduct in the affair the less that his admirers say, the greater will be their discretion."† This is a pregnant admission. Hume contends "that Cranmer alone of all Anna's adherents still retained his friendship for her." Hume knew nothing on which to base such a statement. Here, again, I am compelled, by a recent purview of a number of Puritan writers' statements, to recur to the assertion they make, that "Archbishop Cranmer visited Anna Boleyn three days before her execution, and gave 'her great spiritual comfort!'" In the first volume I have disposed of this unfounded statement. On the contrary, the Archbishop was busily engaged at the time in question "*preparing for the wedding of Anna's successor; nay, on the very day she was beheaded, the Primate signed the dispensation and other ecclesiastical forms condescendingly deemed necessary for the marriage of Henry and Jane Seymour.*" These documents are still extant with that *death-black date*.‡

What defence can the Puritan advocates of Archbishop

* In the first volume of this work I have discussed at some length the question of Anna Boleyn's religious sentiments, and how far she agreed with the latent opinions of Archbishop Cranmer.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 509.

‡ Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. iii.

Cranmer make for his conduct during the few days preceding the judicial murder of Anna Boleyn? Anna Boleyn is claimed as a patroness of the Reformation. Do the believers of such baseless assertions as these consider it a virtue in Cranmer to have compassed that patroness's death? It would require all the genius of a great *Nisi Prius* advocate to sustain such a view.

Again I have to return to the arrest of Anna Boleyn. There can be no doubt that Henry consulted Cranmer throughout the whole of the conspiracy against the Queen. The Archbishop alone knew of all his royal master's "love intrigues"—more, indeed, than even the Duke of Suffolk and Lord Clinton.* The members of the council knew nothing of the King's plans until fully matured, or a "conscientious view of the matter to be disposed of" was laid before them. Cranmer was his adviser and guide; or, to use the words of Queen Katharine, "Henry was Cranmer's shadow." Cranmer was no stranger to the growing passion of his Sovereign for Jane Seymour, and the presents lavished on her for some months previous to the 1st of May, so fatal to Anna. Cranmer's biographers are silent as to his proceedings during that period; but a combination of circumstances closely linked with the accommodating character of the man—who never seemed to act without a motive—and the fact that Henry was in almost daily intercourse with him, lead to a fair conclusion as to the part he assumed in the plot against the Queen previous

* Henry's indescribable correspondence with Cranmer concerning Anne of Cleves manifests what license a layman, however despotic, could dare to use in letters to an archbishop. In the history of abominable literature nothing to equal the King's correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury is to be found. But, then, the monarch understood the man to whom he addressed his ineffable remarks.

to her arrest. Let the reader reflect on the words of the King—"With Thomas Cranmer at my elbow, I could overcome every difficulty." And again—we have to judge by context—the hesitating admission of Dean Hook, that, "in his worst actions, Henry the Eighth found an instrument in Cranmer."* Cranmer had satisfied the King's "conscience" in the case of Katharine; he could accomplish a more facile task in the case of Anna Boleyn. He had won Henry's patronage by offering suggestions and pandering to his evil passions in one case. Why not more readily in the other?

I must pursue the investigation a little further. John Foxe states that the Archbishop was the "confidential adviser of Henry," whilst Dean Hook contends that he was not a constant councillor of the King's. The Dean, however, admits in a subsequent passage that "the personal feeling of attachment to Cranmer on the part of Henry was no secret to the courtiers."† And again: "The Archbishop's secretary records that he heard Lord Crumwell say one day at dinner to my Lord of Canterbury—'you were born in a happy hour, I suppose, for do or say what you will, the King will always take it at your hand. And I must needs confess that in some things I have complained of you; but all in vain; for the King will never give credit against you, whatever is laid to your charge; but let me or any other of the Council be complained of, his Highness will most severely chide or fall out with us.'"<‡

Dean Hook feeling the force of Crumwell's observations (quoted by himself), and the fact that the Archbishop's

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 418.

† *Ibid.* vol. vii. pp. 125, 126.

‡ *Ralph Morrice*, p. 259; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

confidential secretary relates them, attempts to "explain matters." "Cranmer," he says, "was happy to be the King's friend; Crumwell, a keen observer of men, saw that this was Cranmer's ambition and pride, and he knew how to apply the harmless flattery." A man in this situation could hardly fail to be frequently called upon by his master to sustain him out of doors, and to give the weight of his position to the performance of that master's will. In what a contemptible light does Dean Hook place both King and adviser! "Henry liked to have his opinions canvassed; it was a new source of enjoyment to him when he found a man who would *openly tell him his mind, and when he knew all the while that this same man would, when the King's will was distinctly declared, eat his own words, and obey.*"*

It has been said that between Crumwell and Cranmer there existed a "political and religious compact;" although they were very dissimilar in character, mind, and tastes. Practically such a compact is a mere figure of speech used by "sympathetic historians." Crumwell and Cranmer merely stood at bay, "sentinels at the lion's lair, awaiting with distinctive subservience the royal will, and equally avid of the spoils strewed around by the arrogant profusion of their master." This recent verdict is by no means far astray. Both possessed an apparent courage, yet both exhibited craven hearts when confronted with superior power; they feared and hated each other the more because circumstances compelled them to seem friends.

Dean Hook also states that a "secret compact" existed

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 134.

between those personages. For some reason not known, Crumwell is set down as in the Archbishop's pay, and in receipt of £40 per annum, besides "presents."*

In the way of "presents" Cranmer has the reputation of being very liberal to his "friends in need," but he could hardly have reckoned the Grand Inquisitor amongst them. Crumwell levied "black mail" upon all classes who feared his power; and none dreaded him more than Churchmen.

It has been contended by several of Cranmer's panegyrists that it is not fair to associate his "honoured name" with the actions of so bad a man as Thomas Crumwell; but it is difficult to separate the actions of the two men. In the case of the German Anabaptists, Cranmer and Crumwell acted in commendable harmony against the foes of society and property. The Landgrave of Hesse and his supporters "earnestly besought" King Henry to "commit the Anabaptists to the flames."† In the same spirit Lord Crumwell denounced the Sacramentarians to-day as heretics, and to-morrow sent secret messages of comfort to their leaders. There can now be no question as to the fact that Crumwell was actuated by venal considerations, and as far as religious sentiments were concerned he was indifferent. Poor and obscure as the generality of the English Anabaptists were, some of them possessed treasures in gold, silver, and jewels; they were known to Crumwell's agents

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii.

† Several of the leading Protestant writers of Germany demanded the extermination of the Anabaptists, whom they described as a class "wanting, under the guise of reforming religion, to overturn the social relations of life." Melancthon, who has been styled by several writers as the "gentle Reformer," spoke and wrote in vigorous language against the revolutionary Anabaptists. Perhaps party and sectarian feeling has painted the Anabaptists worse than they really were.

as money-lenders and usurers. In the case of Lambert, it is impossible to separate the opinions and the policy pursued by Crumwell and the Archbishop. Lambert was sent to the stake for denying the "Real Presence;" yet at this time Crumwell wrote in "private letters" for and against Transubstantiation. Again, the King publicly maintained the doctrine, and Crumwell and Cranmer were to the front to applaud the royal theologian. Lord Crumwell describes Lambert as a "Sacramentary," one who held the "Lord's Supper" to be only a pious rite, appointed to commemorate the death of Christ. In a letter to Sir Thomas Wyatt, the English Ambassador in Germany, Crumwell says: "The King's Highness, for the reverence of the Holy Sacrament of the altar, did sit openly in his hall, and there presided at the disputation and process and judgment pronounced against a miserable heretic Sacramentary, who was burned on the 20th of November. It was a wonder to see with what excellent majesty his Highness executed the office of Supreme Head; how benignly he essayed to convert the miserable man, and how strong his Highness argued against him."

Crumwell gave expression to the above sentiments in 1538—just the very time it was alleged he was "a staunch Lutheran;" and a "most valiant soldier against the religion of Rome."* Dr. Cranmer is said to have been secretly enrolled amongst "the doctors of the new learning" at this juncture; yet at the above Council of Disputation in favour of the Real Presence, Collier and other historians

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 152; Godwin's Annals; Foxe, vol. ii. p. 396-426; Hume (folio), vol. iii. p. 230.

describe Cranmer as *seconding the King's proofs "by new topics."** Gardyner followed in support of Cranmer; Tunstal took up the argument after Gardyner; and Stokesley and "six other bishops brought fresh statements in support of the King's views, till they silenced, or rather confounded, the wretched Lambert."† That they did not convince him may be gathered from his summary execution.

In all the transactions between Henry and his Archbishop of Canterbury, the scene in which Lambert was produced to argue the question of the "Real Presence" is perhaps the most remarkable. Westminster Hall was the place chosen for the discussion; vast crowds of people "thronged the road thither to offer homage to the King in his mighty mission of defending the doctrine of the Real Presence in the Holy Sacrament of the altar." The King appeared in magnificent white robes, seated on the throne with cross-bearers, heralds, &c.; the prelates, in state vestments, were placed on the King's right; the temporal peers on his left. The judges and all the higher lawyers of the English bar were seated behind the bishops; and the most favoured courtiers were also allotted a place. A flourish of trumpets, then a pause of a few minutes, and again the tolling of divers bells announced the entrance of the "wicked heretic," Lambert, and the assembly were shocked—or affected to be so—at his presence. The Bishop of Chichester opened the busi-

* Foxe's Chronicle; Burnet's Reformation.

† Collier's Ecclesiastical Hist., vol. iv. In the same volume (pp. 32–46) is to be found an interesting analysis of Henry's "Defence of the Seven Sacraments." The Holy Eucharist is the subject on which the King chiefly displays his undoubted learning and research. It has been alleged that Sir Thomas More was the real author of the book in question. Many circumstances are opposed to this conclusion. Fisher and Dean Collet are more likely to have aided the King.

ness of the day by stating that though the King had disincorporated some monks and friars, and reformed many matters in the Church, he was firmly resolved to maintain the purity of the old Catholic faith. The bishops' address was a long rambling statement, in which every virtue was attributed to King Henry. The monarch and his bishops were of the same principles at this time; both were upholders of the chief *dogmata* of the Church, which, as time went on, and the license of royal prerogatives increased, were, one after another, with more or less unwillingness, finally abandoned.

The King addressed Lambert in a bantering tone. "Ho, ho, good fellow, what is thy name?" On learning that he had two names, the regal controversialist waxed warm. "Two names! No, I will not trust a man who has two names. No, by the Mother of G——, I would not trust a brother if he had two names."* Assuming the name of John Nicholson Lambert constituted the crime in this instance. This was a bad beginning for Lambert, especially as his reputation was not good. Nevertheless, Christian charity and humanity protest in the strongest terms against the whole proceeding. The King, his seven bishops, and Lord Crumwell were five hours engaged in the discussion. At the conclusion, his Highness, addressing Lambert, said: "What sayest thou now, after the instructions of those learned and godly bishops of mine? Art thou satisfied? Wilt thou live or die?" "I throw myself on the mercy of your Highness," replied Lambert. "Then," said Henry,

* See Godwin's *Annals*; Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iv. pp. 424-429; Strype's *Memorials*; Hume, vol. iii. (fol. edit.), pp. 228-229; Lingard, vol. v. pp. 116, 117; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 59.

"thou must die, for I will not be the patron of heretica."* Cranmer and Crumwell applauded the sentiment, as it showed the zeal of the King for the doctrines disputed by Lambert.

It is recorded by Dr. Whyte, who was present, and had the repute of a learned man, that Archbishop Cranmer "never spoke in his life with more force and argument than on this occasion." And he adds—"The King several times laid his hand on Dr. Cranmer's shoulder in an affectionate and approving manner." Henry himself is described as having conducted the arguments with ability and moderation, and showed a large amount of theological knowledge. Considering the subsequent actions of the lay and clerical notables present, the entire argumentation constituted a strange performance. Edward Hall, the historian, also an eye-witness, states that Lambert "showed no ability in the discussion, but considerable terror." No marvel that the unhappy man should be in terror or despair when he beheld his supposed friends—men like Taylor, Barnes,† Cranmer, and Crumwell, who had led him privately to understand that they were of the same belief as himself—"loud in their denunciation of his heretical opinions," and all agreeing in sending him to the stake. Honours are yet paid to the memory of Lambert by many unsophisticated Dissenters, who know not that, if they will have Lambert a martyr, it is because he was also the dupe of men who have been almost deified by writers of that Reformed Church from which have seceded those who still hold Lambert in pious memory. The judgment consigning

* State Records; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 62.

† Dr. Barnes was once Prior of the Augustinian House at Cambridge. He is described by Blunt as "a stupid incorrigible fanatic."

Lambert to the flames was pronounced by Lord Crumwell, who made an oration on the "*blasphemous wickedness of denying the Real Presence.*" The evidence as to these transactions is quite convincing ; and, being so, has been altogether suppressed by many writers. Maister Foxe has made an excuse for Crumwell's conduct to Lambert, by stating that "he had him privately conveyed to his own house, where he begged his pardon for the manner in which he had treated him." What an incredible statement ! The proud haughty Minister of the King to apologise to the friendless and miserable Lambert ! The most obtuse reader of John Foxe will hardly credit such a statement. But Foxe conveniently makes no mention of a "later incident"—namely, that Lord Crumwell was present when Lambert was fastened to the stake ! Crumwell's "private letter," written about this time to Sir Thomas Wyatt, places the whole question, from the "Conference before the King" down to the scene of the stake, beyond doubt.*

Archbishop Cranmer's conduct at this time also appears in a strange light. Burnet expresses an opinion to the effect that the Archbishop did not believe in the "Real Presence" at the period of Lambert's condemnation and execution. Cranmer's own letters contradict this allegation. Hume, to some extent, adopts Burnet's view of the case. "Whatever," writes David Hume, "were the opinions of Cranmer at the time of the discussion concerning Lambert, he was obliged to conform to the King's views." A melancholy admission in a case involving the interest of integrity and truth. Lingard is of opinion "that Cranmer

* Lord Crumwell's despatches to Sir Thomas Wyatt (1538). The letter in question is printed in Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. iv. p. 428.

was not sincere in his defence of the Real Presence on this occasion." Nothing more likely, because he dare not dissent from the King.

In discussing Lambert's fate, Dean Hook directly charges Cranmer with having "taken a prominent part in the prosecution of that defenceless victim, and consequently must share the obloquy."*

Lambert conducted himself at the stake with great calmness and fortitude amidst the shouts and execrations of a savage mob. The execution presented a horrible spectacle. The unhappy victim was *burned at a slow fire; his legs and thighs were consumed to the bone*; his cries were heart-rending; and at last some of the soldiers, more merciful than the rest, lifted him on their halberts, and threw him into the flames, where he was quickly consumed. Latimer preached the "stake sermon."†

Crumwell's hostility to the Reformers in 1538 appears to be well authenticated; yet we are informed that he was "a staunch Lutheran, and never sent one of the Reformers to the stake."

Foxe has assured his readers that the roasting of Lambert and the Anabaptists "was all arranged and carried out under the special order of Bishop Gardyner." Of this allegation Dean Hook writes: "There is not a particle of authority for the statement." The Dean adds: "Foxe and Burnet, and writers of that school, attribute every wrong-doing in Henry's reign to Gardyner, and most ridiculously claim for Cranmer everything that was done right. This is peculiarly provoking to the honest inquirer.‡

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 55.

† *Stowa, Foxe, Burnet*; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi.

‡ *Ibid.*, vol. vii. p. 58.

John Nicholson Lambert was born in Suffolk; and in subsequent years met Bilney at Cambridge University. "The hot-blooded Lambert," as he was called by the students, soon adopted the opinions of Bilney; became the friend of Frith and Tyndale, whom he visited at Antwerp. He was for years in needy circumstances, and kept a school in London, to "earn a precarious livelihood as a teacher." The parents of the children, however, protested against his religious opinions, and the school soon failed.

"The question," writes Dean Hook, "may be asked, 'What kind of Protestant was little Thomas Bilney?' We suspect that the frequenters of Exeter Hall will be astonished to hear of Bilney, who is claimed by Foxe as a Protestant martyr, that the same John Foxe (in another place) remarks: 'That concerning Mass and the Sacrament of the altar, *Thomas Bilney never varied or differed from the most grossest Papists.*'"*

Dean Hook again states that on the morning of Bilney's execution, he was attended by Father Warner, the parish priest of Winterton, who heard his confession, gave him absolution, and administered Holy Communion to him.† Three pages further on, the Dean describes Bilney as an "illustrious *Protestant martyr.*" If poor Bilney were "illustrious," he ought to have been better known, and the religion he died in "settled without any cavil." What a strange oversight was this of Dean Hook! But *aliquando dormitat Homerus*. In a note to this passage, the learned Dean observes: "It has been shown incidentally by Dr. Maitland, that nearly all who suffered in the days of Henry, Edward, and Mary were prosecuted because it was known,

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. ix. p. 37.

† *Ibid.*, vol. ix. p. 36.

though it could not always be proved, that they held *Socialistic opinions.*" The Puritan writers have set down a number of persons as embracing the "new learning," who never joined it in any form, but merely quarreled with the clergy, or sought to share in the loot instituted by the profligacy of the Court and its favourites.

To return to Cranmer. The Archbishop was not considered "cruel or vindictive;" yet, from the commencement of his career, he seemed to have been impressed with the idea that "heretics should be consigned to the flames."

In a private note (June, 1533) to Sir John Hawkins, English Ambassador in Germany, the Archhishop wrote thus: "One Frith, who was in the Tower, a prisoner, was commanded by the King's Highness to be examined before me, my Lord of London (Bonner), my Lord of Winchester (Gardynier), my Lord Suffolk, my Lord Chancellor, and my Lord of Wiltshire. Frith's opinion was so notably wrong that we could not despatch him, but were obliged to leave him to the determination of his ordinary, the Bishop of London. His said opinion is of such nature that he thought it not necessary to believe, as an article of *our* faith, that there is the very corporeal presence of Christ within the host and sacrament of the altar, and holdeth on this point much after the opinion of *Æcolompadius*. *And surely I, myself, sent for him three or four times to persuade him to leave off that imagination*; but for all that we could do therein he would not listen to my counsel. Notwithstanding, now he is at a final end with all examinations, and my Lord of London hath given sentence, and delivered the said Frith to the executive power, so that he may look every day now *to go unto the fire*. There is also condemned

with him one Andrews, a tailor, for the self-same opinions.”*

With what cold-blooded indifference the Archbishop speaks of sending his fellow-creatures to the flames!

In a letter to Osiander, Dr. Cranmer complains of the “loose casuistry and mistaken opinions” put forth by the German divines of the “new learning,” and “what scandal they caused to the Reformation.” “They allowed,” observes the Archbishop, “the younger sons of noblemen to entertain (to cohabit with) . . . to prevent the parcelling out of their estates, and lessening the figure of the elder family; that divines who allowed this liberty were altogether unqualified to make invectives against any indulgences in the Church of Rome.” “I desire,” continues Cranmer, “to know what excuse can be made for your permission of a *second marriage after divorce, while both the parties were living*; and what is still worse, you allow a man a *plurality of wives without the ceremony of a divorce*. That this is a matter of fact, you acquainted me as I remember in some of your letters, adding withal, that Melancthon himself was present at one of these second weddings and gave countenance to it. But this practice disagrees both with the nature of marriage, which does not make two, but one flesh; and is likewise a clear contradiction of the Holy Scriptures.† It is plain from the institutions of our Saviour and His Apostles that matrimony ought to be a single relation; and that this engagement *must not be repeated till the death of one of the parties*. If you reply: ‘The case of fornication must be excepted.’

* Ellis's Royal Letters (First Series), v. ii. p. 40.

† Matthew xix.; Mark x.; Luke xvi.; Rom. vii.; 1 Cor. vii.

If this is your answer, I desire to know whether the loss of the wife's honour was the reason of Melancthon's indulging the husband in polygamy? If he went upon this ground, then we have the received doctrine of the Church, from the first ages to our own times, against this exposition. Now, we ought to interpret the Scriptures in conformity to the sense of the ancients. What St. Austin's opinion, or rather what the opinion of the Church was to the century in which this Father lived, he gives us to understand in his discourse to Pallinatus."

Again, Dr. Cranmer writes to Osiander on the question of polygamy: "I would gladly know how the German divines disengaged themselves from the charge of polygamy. Do they maintain the lawfulness of polygamy, and endeavour to reconcile it with the New Testament—or whether they believe something of condescension or connivance necessary to the present juncture; and that unless they should relax a little upon this point, some greater mischief might happen? If they go upon the first ground (which I fancy they do not) they have more of the Turk than the Christian in them. And if they rely upon the latter scheme, they will find themselves extremely encumbered; for which way can they *indulge that liberty which Christ, His Apostles, and the whole Church have directly forbidden?*"*

The importance of the foregoing document will be admitted even by the few who have hitherto seen it. This private opinion of Dr. Cranmer, written to his kinsman Osiander, is a striking proof of the difference between his convictions and his action. With the consciousness here

* MSS. Records; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii.; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv.

expressed, and from his conduct in the case of Queen Katharine and Anna Boleyn, I seek in vain for an agreement. Was not, in fact, his conscience all through subservient to the remorseless will of his Sovereign?

The Six Articles became Dr. Cranmer's "domestic difficulty." That statute not only denounced, but incarcerated and put to death those who denied the chief Articles of the Catholic creed. . . . "Through it thousands," says Foxe, "were imprisoned and tortured," and one of its clauses, which ordained the celibacy of the clergy, compelled even Cranmer to forego the companionship of his wife.* The statements of the numerous prosecutions under the Six Articles have been more or less exaggerated by different historians, who drew their information from Foxe and Burnet; again I recur to Dr. Maitland's researches to prove that during the eight years in which the Six Articles were in force, there were only twenty-five prosecutions; and with respect to these twenty-five, it is even doubtful whether it was for a violation of this particular statute that men were condemned. "I believe," observes Dr. Maitland, "that the King was roused by an idea that the Church, of which he was resolved to be Supreme Head, was likely to be overthrown by a torrent of what he considered infidelity and blasphemy, and that he devised, and insisted on, and would have carried such a measure as he thought was suited to check the menaced evil. Such I believe to have been the

* Cranmer used his special office for "dispensations" in a manner never contemplated by the Pontiffs, for he granted licences to many priests to enter into wedlock. This action on the part of the Archbishop excited a feeling of indignation amongst the laity against a married clergy. See *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 27.

origin of the Six Articles."* Wilkins—a credible authority in this matter—contends that Henry himself drew up the Six Articles, and the fervent language used in relation to the "Real Presence" in the Holy Eucharist is like the style and mode of argument used by the King during those conscience-stricken intervals which embittered his latter years. The impulsive Melancthon proclaimed Gardynier and the Papal bishops as the authors of the Six Articles. In one of his letters to Henry VIII., on the subject of this enactment, he said, "Oh, bishops! oh, wicked Winchester!" The man who thus expressed his horror of the Six Articles was one of those who had written "approvingly" of Calvin having consigned Servetus to the flames. Yet, as I have already remarked, Melancthon was considered by his friends and contemporaries as "an amiable and benevolent man." Some English Dissenters have styled him "a serpent," "a viper," "a spy"†—a notable dissidence of sentiment amongst "teachers of men" who have been described "as inspired from Above." It is probable, however, that Melancthon's impeachment of Gardynier and other bishops rests on the statements of his English correspondents, Poyntet and Bale, for after his appointment to an English professorship he was frequently absent in Germany, "mending quarrels" amongst his friends of the "new learning." Melancthon was not sufficiently acquainted with the character of his English correspondents. Pepys, in writing of the witnesses produced against Archbishop

* Dr. Maitland's *Essays on the English Reformation*, p. 270.

† To show how the men of the "new learning" differed amongst themselves, I find that Gentilis, Felix, Mans, Rothman, Barneveldt, and others were sent to the stake by their co-believers. In fact, there was no unity in the new dispensation; and a clamorous protestation against the olden creed seemed the only principle on which all agreed.

Plunket in the days of Charles the Second, says, "I would not hang a dog on such testimony." The moral worth of Bale and Poynt could not suffer from any comparison with the worst men subsidised by Shaftesbury, Danby, or Sunderland. Good, old, loquacious Pepys would not have whipped a cur on their sworn oath.

There has been much misrepresentation as to the part taken in Parliament by the Papal and anti-Papal notables on the question of the Six Articles. The subservient laics offered no opposition to the measure; but the bishops discussed its merits for three days; and although it was intended to exterminate the men who had adopted the "new learning," they had the generosity and charity to condemn such legislation; nevertheless, it was carried through both Houses of Parliament. It has been stated by a biographer of Archbishop Cranmer that the latter absented himself from the House of Peers whilst this measure was pending—or, at least, that there is no record that he was present; but more recent researches prove that he was not only present, but voted on every division which took place on the subject of the Bill, and *adhered* throughout to the principles propounded by his Royal Master, although on a preceding occasion he had the courage to argue with him the merits of the Six Articles. From such perilous encounters of the mind, however, none knew better than Cranmer when to make a time of retreat. Foxe alleges that the Archbishop opposed the Bill to the last, and Burnet reiterates the assertion. Those writers must not have searched deeply for their authorities, or they might have found journals and State Papers to hand in their time contradicting their assertion. A paper in the handwriting of a "Lord of Parliament" who was present states that his

Grace of Canterbury adopted the King's views of the Six Articles. The Archbishop excused himself on the ground, that he became "*confounded by the goodly learning and wisdom of the King.*"* This statement is borne out by other documents discovered within the last twenty years. Cranmer's action on this occasion was quite in keeping with all his past policy. With regard to the administration of the measure, when it became law, the cautious Archbishop and his clergy of the province of Canterbury "evaded and tricked with it." The men chosen for carrying out the Six Articles were appositely taken from the Monastic Inquisitors, and seemed to have been selected from the thorough baseness of their characters. Sharon Turner affirms that the measure was carried in the House of Lords by the "un-constitutional presence of the King."

Mr. Froude, who justly condemns the Six Articles, seems to feel that the conduct of the Reformers demanded some measure of repression. He observes, "The Six Articles Bill had been provoked by extravagance and excesses. It was still necessary to leave the bishops some weapons to suppress disorder; but it should be a weapon with a blunter edge."†

In Edward's reign Archbishop Cranmer caused the Six Articles to be repealed—a proceeding which met with the entire concurrence of the country. Upon the accession of Queen Mary, the Commons re-enacted this statute; but when it reached the House of Lords, that assembly—led by Gardynier, Heath, and the entire bench of prelates—rejected it as a "disgrace to the Statute Book, and a reflection upon

* Roger Barrow on the Six Articles (black letter); Stowe; Hume, vol. iii.; Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. v.

† Froude's History of England, vol. iv. p. 296.

the Christian character of the country.”* So much for the accuracy of the statements of Melancthon, Bucer, Coverdale, Foxe, and Burnet.†

Dean Hook's sympathies are with Cranmer as to the results of this penal statute. “It was more keenly felt by the Archbishop than any other man. It broke up his happy home, divorced him from his wife for a season, and separated him from his children.”† At the best, the “wife and children” were residing at Lambeth Palace in a mean, clandestine manner, which, if Mrs. Cranmer had been a high-spirited woman, she would not have submitted to; but she could not have been high-spirited or independent; in a stranger land, even a German girl of seventeen might have, in more recent times, hesitated to become the clandestine wife of a man nearly fifty years of age. Osiander's niece was well aware of the fact that, both in *civil and canon law*, a marriage with a priest or bishop was null and void in the eyes of every legal tribunal in Europe *at that period*. Therefore, as a wife, she must have known that she had no legal existence. Dean Hook gives explanations which do not improve the aspect of this affair. “Cranmer,” he says, “was probably enabled to live with his wife by rendering it difficult, if not impossible, for his adversaries to prove that a marriage between him and Margaret had ever taken place.” Now, even if the Dean regarded it a pardonable act in a priest to perjure himself, or more mildly to put it, that a *suppressio veri* is commendable in “reforming ancient misconceptions,” surely the plan implied would not be moral nor honourable. Would the Dean admit a *leman* as befitting

* State Papers (Domestic) of Queen Mary's reign.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 106.

amongst the *personnel* of an Archbishop—and that Archbishop a “Reformer?” “A clandestine marriage is no marriage, but void in the sight of God and of His Church,” is a statement for which there are high theological grounds. But Mrs. Cranmer, we are informed by Dean Hook in a subsequent narrative, was not a woman of “much refinement,” and, we must suppose, adopted the situation, which, in Teutonic notions, may have been passably satisfactory.

Whenever Dean Hook refers to the marriage of Cranmer, he seems to do so with nervous reluctance. “Though the marriage was known,” writes the Dean, “*it was not publicly announced.*” It was never known publicly until the reign of Edward the Sixth.

Queen Elizabeth never hesitated to express her dislike of married bishops or priests ; and few readers of history can forget her gross and ungrateful saying to Mrs. Parker, when she came to thank her for her splendid hospitality at her husband’s house: “I do not know (says Elizabeth) by what name to call you, Madame. My Archbishop of Canterbury cannot have a wife—that is impossible ; neither can he have a concubine ; but, whoever you are, or whatever you may be, I thank you.”

I agree with Dean Hook in his just censure of language like this uttered by Elizabeth ; but the use of it was exceedingly appropriate in the mouth of the daughter of such a father.

Dean Hook describes the condition of Cranmer’s mind when the Six Articles were put into operation: “He still devoutly celebrated Mass ; and celebrating Mass, he could not deny the dogma of Transubstantiation. . . . He consoled himself for the absence of his wife by learned discussions with Ridley.” And so, up to the time of Henry’s death (1547), the Archbishop was “*devoutly celebrating Mass*” for fourteen

years as a Catholic prelate ; and on every occasion he deliberately committed, according to his own public teaching, a fresh sacrilege and a fresh perjury at the altar of God. Now, can any conscientious human being—I will insult no creed by appealing to its adherents by name—say that this conduct of Archbishop Cranmer was that of a man with the slightest pretensions to morality, honour, or honesty ? At the very best, his life was a perennial hypocrisy. Who can advocate conduct like his ? What advocacy can cleanse the memory of a man whose existence for long years bore false testimony to all the principles of virtue and honour ? This prelate is by too many credited with having reformed the olden Church, and established a new one : did he *reform himself* ? Even if he believed in the new order of things, what can excuse his long-standing falsehood and dissimulation in practising the old, and incurring the awful responsibility of accumulated sacrilege ?

In the discussion on the Sacraments in Convocation, Cranmer contended “that *auricular confession should be maintained* ; he called on the bishops and clergy to warn the people that they must give *no less faith and credence to the same words of absolution, so pronounced by ministers of the Church, than they would give unto the very words of God Himself if He should speak with us out of heaven, according to the saying of Christ : ‘ Whose sins soever you retain, they are retained.’ And in another place Christ saith, ‘ Whosoever be with you, heareth Me.’ ”**

This opinion of Cranmer’s was also deliberately written and printed in the “*Institution of a Christian Man.*”†

Yet, strange to say, one of the many virtues ascribed to

* Collier’s Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 217.

Cranmer by partisan historians has been his hostility to the confessional! Such is the strange mode in which history has been prevalently written for the English people. I cannot help saying there would be an inevitable change in all truth-loving minds if the masses had the opportunity, courage, or candour to read outside of those Puritan histories whose success has been secured in proportion to their misrepresentation or intolerance. Dean Hook admits that the Article touching the "Real Presence," in the "Christian Man," shows that Cranmer believed "the corporeal presence of our Lord in *that ordinance*." But what Cranmer wrote is no proof of what he thought, or believed, or cared for. The King maintained the doctrine of the "Real Presence" and the Sacrament of Penance, and his Archbishop, of course, professed to hold and maintain the same opinions—as he might have held and professed Islamism, if Henry in his caprice had adopted the creed of the Crescent, as he had—in one regard at least—its practice.

On several occasions, when commenting on the policy of Cranmer, in Henry's reign, Dean Hook, in an evident anxiety concerning the reputation of the Archbishop, says, "*He was not a Protestant at this time.*" It is difficult to understand the learned Dean's mode of defence, because it involves so many contradictions. In speaking of the King and Cranmer, he assures his readers that "neither the Monarch nor his Archbishop of Canterbury sought to eradicate the Catholic religion, *but to the hour of their death they each of them professed to adhere to it, and to advance the cause of Catholicism as the cause of Truth. They would only separate it from Papistry.*"* In another passage, Dean Hook contends

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. p. 491.

that Cranmer was "a man of the 'new learning,' and was at the head of the 'new learning' party. The 'new learning' in England had not any definite principles; or rather its one principle consisted in a readiness to advance, a willingness to examine any subject brought upon the *tapis*. It was a time to inquire; the time to dogmatise had not arrived."* And again: "All the changes of religious observance which took place in Edward's reign *were privately arranged* in the lifetime of Henry VIII."† This admission requires no commentary: it carries with it an overwhelming verdict against Cranmer and those who acted with him.

Cranmer was not without meeting some personally awkward incidents in connexion with the Six Articles. In 1538-39, a Scottish priest named Alexander Alesse, to whom I have already alluded, became a professor at Cambridge, under the patronage of Lord Cromwell. Having "tampered with Catholic principles to a certain extent," and the Six Articles being proposed to Parliament, Cromwell set aside his Scotch professor. Alesse made known his grievances to Archbishop Cranmer, who, having heard that the professor was secretly married, expressed his sympathy for him. At an interview, Cranmer informed him that he could no longer extend protection to married priests; that the statute of the Six Articles was imperative in that matter. He advised him to leave the country, and repair at once to Germany.

"Happy man that you are," observed the Archbishop; "you can escape. I wish that I could do the same. Truly, my See would be no hindrance to me. And now

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.† *Ibid.*

you must make all haste to quit the island before a blockade is established, unless you are willing to sign the decree, as I have done. I have sealed it, compelled by fear. I repent of what I have done, and if I had known that my only punishment would have been deposition from my Archbishopric—as I hear my Lord Latimer is deposed—of a truth I would not have subscribed.* I am grieved that you have been deprived of your salary by my Lord Crumwell, and that you have no funds for your travelling expenses, and that I have no ready money: I dare not mention this to my friends, lest the King should become aware that I have given you warning to escape, and that I have provided you with the means of travelling. I give you, however, this ring, as a token of my friendship. It at one time belonged to Thomas Wolsey, and it was presented to me by the King when he gave me the Archbishopric of Canterbury.”†

Wolsey's ring presented by Cranmer to an obscure priest who had merely committed the offence of breaking his vows! Such a consignment manifested in Cranmer much meanness, great ingratitude, and an utter want of delicacy.

If the interview were not proved by the State Papers to be a fact, the occurrence would appear to be invented. Another consideration will strike the reader on perusing the circumstances of this interview. We have here presented a heartless monarch, indulging in all licentiousness himself, yet seeking, in moments of remorse, to have the spiritual conduct of his kingdom adjusted to

* In another chapter, Dean Hook admits that the conduct of Cranmer did not correspond with *his words*.

† State Papers of Elizabeth's reign, p. 533; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

canonical rule. Henry, conscious of incapacity or will to conquer his passions, wished, from a sentiment thoroughly intelligible, that his people should not be so bad as himself, and therefore impressed an abstinence from license upon even the spiritual advisers whom he had himself estranged. "Heureux le peuple," says Fénelon, "qui est conduit par un sage roi." Henry's passions and prejudices had destroyed his chances of wisdom: those who were capable of good counsel the dungeon and the axe had disposed of.

Many years after the deaths of Henry and Cranmer, Alesse related to Queen Elizabeth the particulars of the above remarkable conversation between himself and the Archbishop of Canterbury. Dean Hook questions the narrative of Alesse. "I cannot," writes the learned Dean, "but suspect that he coloured his statements, that they might be more acceptable to Queen Elizabeth."*

Lord Crumwell was the avowed patron and friend of Alexander Alesse, who, like many of his countrymen, had been for years trading upon a religious sentiment.

Lord Crumwell was ranked in the House of Peers above the Bishops, and next to Royal blood. He was also introduced by the King into Convocation as his Vicar-General; and Crumwell in turn ushered in Alexander Alesse as *his* theologian. Alesse sometimes spoke on subjects expressive of his patron's opinions on the dogmas and discipline of the Church. Timid as the Convocation were, they indignantly censured Crumwell's conduct in intruding his creature; and even Cranmer, whether impelled by *esprit de corps* or anger at the high-handedness of Crumwell,

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 505.

joined in his brethren's reprobation. Sooth to say, however, as Crumwell was forced upon the Convocation by Henry, and would obtrude his opinions on theological subjects, he did require some expositors, his own early education being poorly calculated to impart a knowledge of divinity.*

The marriage of Anne of Cleves and her unprecedented divorce are connected with other unpleasant phases in the history of Archbishop Cranmer. I can only briefly allude to this marriage. Anne of Cleves was the first Protestant Queen of England; and there is little doubt that she was chosen by Crumwell and Craumer as a wife for King Henry on account of the zeal displayed by her father, mother, and brother for the Reformation.† Upon the arrival of Anne in England, she was at first received with favour by some of the future Reformers, whilst the old Conservative party of the Catholic Church stood aloof; and the populace indulged in an idle curiosity to behold "the big fat woman so unlike a Queen." "When our blessed King saw his bride," says Sir Francis Bryan, "he was

* In the *Archbishops of Canterbury* (vol. vii. pp. 181-2), the reader will find chronicled the particulars of those unedifying scenes, derived from contemporary records. Therein Dean Hook regards Crumwell as being "as ignorant of theology as of every other learned subject."

† The mother of Anne of Cleves was distinguished for her hatred of Catholicity; yet in that hostility may have been mingled some elements of patriotism; for Charles the Fifth was the oppressor of the Low Countries at the same time that he was regarded as the head of European Catholic Sovereigns. Watton, the English Ambassador, wrote to Henry the Eighth, stating that Anne's mother "ran out of her wits for spite and anger" at the Emperor's successes in South Germany. On the principle—or want of it—which makes the wrongdoer less prone to pardon than the wronged, Henry of England hated Charles the Fifth for being to him the hostile and contemptuous nephew of the injured Katharine of Arragon.

disappointed, but he knew how to control his feelings. For two nights he did not sleep, and walked his chamber many times. He was puzzled how to act. He waited, however, until he had time for a long discourse with the Archbishop of Canterbury. Everything went contrary. The Archbishop had a severe cold, and was not able to appear until the morning of the marriage. The Princess won't answer at all; but I hear she will disappoint some people by her readiness to hear the Roman Mass. She will do everything to please our good and blessed King. He is taking to the Mass very much again. What will the Archbishop do? *Why, whatever he is ordered, I suppose.* The people who proposed the match must suffer." Bryan may be considered a good authority on this delicate matter, for he was one of Henry's confidants. But a few days had elapsed when the marriage was performed by Archbishop Cranmer. High Mass was first celebrated by the Archbishop, assisted by several priests. "Lord Crumwell was amongst those present, and," writes Bryan, "he edified the King by his piety." Roland Lee says: "Our blessed King was in a religious turn of mind: God keep him so. He received Holy Communion; yet he looked annoyed at everything, and seems more like a widower at the grave of his 'better-half,' than a bridegroom. Somebody* will suffer in the skin and hide for giving him this greasy-faced Jack for a wife."* Few about the Court better understood the character of Henry than the unprincipled Roland Lee.

Hall, who was present at the wedding, describes Henry's

* "Greasy-faced Jack" was a nickname given to the Princess by Lady Rochford.

costume :—" His Grace," the King, "was apparelled in a gown of cloth of gold, raised with great flowers of silver, and furred with black jernest; his coat, crimson satin embroidered with great diamonds, and a rich collar about his neck." The bride was dressed in a homely Dutch costume, which made her appearance disagreeable; she "looked demure, sad, and sour"—very unlike her fair predecessor, "My Mayflower," as Henry called Jane Seymour.*

The married life of Anne of Cleves was rendered more disagreeable, as the King had encouraged the ladies of the Court to mimic and ridicule her. Lady Rochford was foremost among those who insulted and derided the Queen; the Duke of Suffolk and Sir Francis Bryan also amused the King by their gross jests upon her personal appearance. The Archbishop of Canterbury "regretted what an inferior woman the new Queen was; that she was not in any way suited to be the wife of such a magnificent man, and a King so truly good and great; she could not be compared with the lovely Queen Jane of blessed memory."† These observations, whispered to the Duke of Suffolk, were certain to reach the Royal ear. At this time Suffolk was the most mischievous of the King's domestic advisers, and, having been reared from boyhood as a companion to Henry, exercised an influence as to his marriages and amours which no other

* Anne of Cleves was met at Blackheath, on her route to Greenwich, by Lady Margaret Douglas, the King's niece, at the head of eighty-five ladies of quality, on horseback. Those ladies were, of course, commanded to attend, for they had no sympathy with the Dutch Princess. The wedding took place on the 6th of January; the weather was intensely cold, and the people, who were in great poverty about that time, had learned to take little interest in Royal weddings.

† Letters of Sir Francis Bryan, to Roger Ascham, "concerning things about Court." The letters above quoted are modernised and abbreviated.

man could do ; and, like Sir Francis Bryan, he suggested whatever he thought most agreeable to his master's will. Miss Strickland describes Suffolk as " the ready tool of the King in all his matrimonial tyrannies ;" indeed, it may be added that the courtiers of the time disgraced their station by the conduct they pursued towards the harmless and unoffending Anne of Cleves.

In a few months the Queen was set aside, and the King again had recourse to his " spiritual adviser." One of the questions raised on the divorce of Anne of Cleves was that her father " contracted her in marriage to the Duke of Lorraine." When that contract took place, Anne of Cleves was only twelve years old ; but the betrothal was afterwards set aside with the consent of both parties. Henry's conscience seemed to become more sensitive as he proceeded, for in this instance he pleaded that Anne could not lawfully become his wife ; and the Archbishop of Canterbury, of course, agreed in his Sovereign's opinion. It detracts, however, very much from any possible belief in Henry's sincerity, when it is remembered that these scruples only arose on the eve of a new bridal. The Convocation of Canterbury, most of them " good Protestants" in the next reign, adopted the views of the divorce submitted to them by Archbishop Cranmer, and they declared by a large majority that " the marriage of Anne of Cleves with the King was null and void." Cranmer, fortified by the foreknown concurrence of Convocation, pronounced judgment, dissolving the marriage. An Act of Parliament followed, decreeing that " all the proceedings of the Convocation and the Archbishop of Canterbury were according to law and justice ;" that his Highness the King was then at liberty to marry any other

maiden he pleased ; and "the said Anne of Cleves could marry any man who asked her to enter wedlock."*

The litigation attending the divorce of Katharine of Arragon occupied some six years, and caused an expenditure in secret service money amounting to £22,000—an enormous sum in those days ; the divorce of Anne of Cleves was accomplished within a week, and the whole expenditure did not exceed £156. The moneys in both cases were undoubtedly spent in bribing lawyers and "canonists." The conduct of Bishops Gardynier, Bonner, and the Convocation in the case of Anne of Cleves had even less basis than in that of Anna Boleyn.

Previous to the divorce, a document was submitted to Anne by Lord Crumwell, for her signature, which document declared that her marriage with the King had never been canonically ratified, and that she agreed to be divorced from his Highness. She did not know what the paper contained, as she could read no language but Plats-Deutsch or Flemish, and it was subsequently used as "*one of the reasons*" for the divorce of Anne. Cranmer had at the very same time in his possession a document containing the King's unmentionable reasons for a divorce, which completely contradicted the paper that Anne of Cleves had signed, not knowing what it contained.†

In what estimation could Henry have held Cranmer—an Archbishop too—that he dared to make him his confidant in the secrets of his licentiousness ? Of all the divorces which

* Lord Herbert's *Life of Henry VIII.* ; *State Papers (Domestic)* of the reign of Henry VIII.

† *State Papers* ; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 75.

Cranmer engaged in at the desire of his changeful and imperious master, this one of Anne of Cleves was by far the worst. No law, spiritual or temporal, could be pleaded in its favour; and the iniquitous facility with which it was accomplished must have satisfied Henry that the last tribunal from which he need fear reproof in his headlong career of crime was the archiepiscopal throne of Canterbury.

When the Royal Commissioners visited Anne of Cleves at Richmond, in order to inform her of the divorce between herself and the King having been finally ratified by Parliament, she became greatly terrified, fainted, and fell to the ground. When she was sufficiently recovered to attend to the "Royal message," the Duke of Suffolk and the Archbishop of Canterbury soothed her with "warm professions of the King's friendship." The King intended to "*adopt her as his sister*;" and to allow her £3,000 per annum.* Anne was greatly relieved when she understood the real nature of the visit from the Commissioners, for she feared that they were about to send her to the Tower.* But before the Royal Commissioners departed, Anne of Cleves drew the wedding-ring from her finger, and handing it to the Duke of Suffolk requested him to convey it to her *quondam* husband, now, by the Royal will, translated into a brother.

Another of Henry's reasons for setting aside the marriage of Anne of Cleves was, that he had not *inwardly given his assent*. But the Parliament, like the Convocation, accepted all the "explanations" made by the King. An Act was passed in 1540, declaring that a pre-contract should be no

* State Papers (Domestic) of Henry's reign.

ground of annulling a marriage, as if that pretext had not been made use of both in the case of Anna Boleyn and Anne of Cleves. Another statute of this unprincipled Parliament made it high treason to deny the dissolution of Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves. The part taken by Archbishop Cranmer against Anne of Cleves I shall not further notice, but leave it to the just and candid reader.

When Henry married Catherine Howard, which he did without giving the ink on the divorce decree as to Anne of Cleves much time to dry, he carried out the heartless and eccentric notion of introducing his "little bride" to his "late wife," and though Anne of Cleves was spiritless enough to "give them a good reception," that fact is no excuse for Henry's conduct. Anne, however, deemed herself fortunate that divorce had become an institution, for when, in a short time after, the "little bride" was sent to the scaffold, the divorced Queen, on hearing of the tragedy, exclaimed, "Good Heaven, what an escape I had!"

Anne of Cleves resided at Richmond, and occasionally at Chelsea, where she won much respect from the people. She took no part in the intrigues of the contending parties of the time; but never forgave Cranmer, and expressed her horror of his general conduct. When he was sent to the Tower in Mary's reign, she observed that "he should have been sent there long before." She was much esteemed by Queen Mary and her husband Philip, and also by the Princess Elizabeth. After a short time the "good living of Old England" made Anne very contented, and she was wont to remark joyously, "There is no place like this England for fedein righte well." Mavillac relates that Anne of Cleves

manifested the most lively satisfaction at having regained her freedom. She took to fine dress, and passed her time in rural sports and recreations. The Protestant Duke of Cleves manifested a proper spirit of independence, and could never be induced to admit the invalidity of his sister's marriage. He never forgave Cranmer for the part he took against the Princess in the sham divorce. The flattering portrait of Anne furnished by Hans Holbein differed much from the original. A contemporary has been so ungallant as to state that she was tall, had coarse features, "ugly hands and feet, a large mouth, and bad teeth; figure ill-proportioned, a vulgar appearance, and ungraceful manners." And it might be added that Anne was much disfigured by small-pox. "She had none of those arts or qualifications," we are further assured, "which might have subdued the antipathy of so 'choiceful' a husband as Henry." He spoke English, Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish; she knew no other language than her own—an "involved Walloon;" he was passionately fond of music; she could neither play nor sing. Henry wished his Queen to excel in the different amusements of his Court, but the "sullen, silent, and ignorant Anne of Cleves possessed no other acquirements than merely to read and write, and sew with her needles." All the previous specious arguments of Crumwell could not reconcile a man like King Henry to such a companion.

Amongst the wedding gifts given by Henry to Anne or Cleves was a ring, on which was inscribed, "God send me well to kepe." With unprincely meanness, when Cranmer had declared him "unmarried," he ordered Anne to return all the wedding presents he had made her. The ring

in question had been previously presented to Anna Boleyn.

Some two years before her death, Anne of Cleves embraced the Catholic religion, for which she was fiercely denounced by the Reformers. She died in July, 1557, at Chelsea, and was buried in Westminster Abbey, near the grave of the unfortunate Anne of Warwick, Queen of Richard the Third.* She had an impressive funeral: High Mass sung by Bonner, Bishop of London; a sermon by the Lord Abbot Feckenhan; thirty monks and forty seculars attended the ceremonies, together with a large number of the inhabitants of London, who had been for years the recipients of her bounty.† Hollingshed describes Anne of Cleves as a "lady of right commendable regard, courteous and gentle, a good housekeeper, and very bountiful to her servants and retainers." Her beneficent spirit was wholly occupied in deeds of charity, caring for the happiness of her maidens and the orphans whom she supported and lodged.

NEXT I come to the extinction of another wife of Henry the Eighth, and Cranmer's relations with the sad case of the "hapless Howard,"—the young and beautiful Catherine—a name which, by the way, occupied half the muster-roll of Henry's conjugal forces. The impeachment of the

* Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. ii. p. 374, opens with an interesting memoir of the beautiful and ill-fated Anne of Warwick. "No memorial," writes Miss Strickland, "now marks the spot where the broken heart of the hapless Anne of Warwick found rest from as much sorrow as could possibly be crowded into the short span of thirty-one years."

† In *Excerpta Historica* is to be seen a quaint description of the ceremonial observed at the funeral of Anne of Cleves; the sorrow of the people for the deceased Queen, and the names of the chief notables present.

King's fifth wife for adultery was the next public question in which Cranmer took a prominent part.

The King and Queen, then only a few months married, received Holy Communion together at Hampton Court on the eve of All Saints' Day (1540). Henry, on the occasion, while kneeling before the altar, raised his eyes, and exclaimed aloud,—“ I render thanks to Thee, O Lord God, that after so many strange accidents that have befallen my marriages Thou hast been pleased to give me a wife so entirely conformed to my inclinations as her I now have.” Two hours later the King requested his Confessor (the Bishop of Lincoln) to prepare a public form of thanksgiving to Almighty God for having blessed him with so loving, dutiful, and virtuous a Queen.* If the “ public thanksgiving ” on the following day took place, Cranmer and his party would have lost the Royal favour; so the Archbishop immediately carried the results of the conspiracy against the Queen to her husband. Catherine had just left the chapel; Henry was kneeling, and alone, when Cranmer suddenly entered and placed the paper “ impeaching the Queen ” in his hand, with a whisper, to “ read it when *entirely alone*.” There are several versions of the above; but all nearly agreeing in substance. Miss Strickland states that Cranmer's object in presenting the information against the Queen so suddenly in the chapel was to *prevent* at once the announcement to the people of the public form of thanksgiving which had been prepared by the Bishop of Lincoln. The absence of the Queen from her accustomed place in the royal chapel

* See Privy Council Reports; Lord Herbert's *Life of Henry VIII.*; *Queens of England*, vol. iii.; Lingard, vol. v.

afforded Dr. Cranmer the better opportunity of striking the decisive blow.* The above observations are highly important, coming, as they do, from a historian who is hostile to the Queen, and an ardent admirer of Archbishop Cranmer.

Cranmer's conduct in reference to Catherine Howard has been designated by some writers as that of "an honest man and a faithful minister." Was his conduct "honest" in assuring Catherine in a private interview in prison that he would obtain her pardon if she incriminated herself, and then used her "confession," as it is styled, to ensure her death? Was there ever such infamy, clerical or lay? Cranmer, indeed, was the man who concocted and arranged the conspiracy against Catherine Howard. His co-conspirators were Lords Audley, Hertford and Southampton. This poor child-queen, it seems, was accused of having written letters to the Roman Pontiff. Cranmer "accidentally" discovered this fact, which at once suggested the plot to put her aside. Audley, Hertford, Suffolk, and Rich acted in harmony with the Court party. All were professing Catholics; no other creed was tolerated by the King. Two persons were named as paramours of the Queen; they were arrested, and the rack was used to extort the desired confessions. The men who made the supposed confessions criminating the Queen were immediately executed. It is strange that the State Papers bearing upon the matter of the execution make no mention of any "confession." Mr. Froude alleges that the accused pleaded guilty; *whilst, according to the State Papers,*

* *Queens of England*, vol. iii. p. 136.

*the judges desired to know how they were to be condemned "WITHOUT EVIDENCE."** In the bill of attainder, also, against Catherine there is no allusion whatever to any confession. Let it be remembered that the Queen *had no trial at all*. The bill of attainder was passed whilst she was a close prisoner, and at a time when those who could have testified to the truth had perished on the scaffold. Catherine, like her cousin, Anna Boleyn, was never confronted with any witnesses.

Dean Hook does not believe that any conspiracy was arranged to slay this young and helpless Queen, and that some of her bitter enemies were amongst the old Papal Conservative party. This statement will not agree with recorded facts. If it be true that the Queen corresponded with the Pope, she must have alarmed the Archbishop of Canterbury and his adherents by her precocious knowledge of political mysticism. However, the truth was, that Catherine Howard was loved by the King, and correspondingly hated by the Archbishop, and his party. If the fascinating young wife of Henry brought about a reconciliation between the Pontiff and the King, in what position would Cranmer appear? No event in that fearful reign was fraught with such base, unmanly turpitude as the death of that defenceless girl, without trial and without proof.

The principal members of the Council were Audley, Craumer,† and Lord Hertford—men well known for their deadly hostility to the House of Norfolk. Lord South-

* State Papers of Henry VIII.'s Reign.

† Cranmer was the leading member of the Privy Council, and, as the Royal favourite, he commanded special attention from the members of that dangerous and despicable caucus.

ampton and Rich were amongst the "investigators."* Upon Henry's state of mind, when supplied with information from Cranmer, Miss Strickland remarks :—"He appears to have been excited with contending passions, and not venturing to trust to his own feelings with regard to his unhappy Queen, he left all the proceedings to the direction of Cranmer and the Council." Here despotism became imbecile—here worn-out profligacy succumbed to deceit and cunning; and the licentious tyrant was ready for another display of his marital qualities. It is as well that, at the time I write of, the Thames was not as the Bosphorus.

The fate of Catherine was decided. Lord Hertford, who possessed a combination of the bad qualities of an evil age, was, if possible, a far more fatal enemy of Catherine than Cranmer; for, as the uncle of Jane Seymour's son, he did not desire "a young Queen to come to the front."

Edmond Howard, Catherine's father, rendered "the State some service." One of the noblest of a truly noble race, he fought with distinguished gallantry at the battle of Flodden Field—the saddest and greatest defeat the brave Scotch had ever suffered. Romance has lent her fancy to depict Edmond Howard's personal encounter with the Earl of Home, leaving his enemy dead after a long contest. He was likewise in the thickest of the fight throughout the day, and "won his spurs," but received no other reward for his services. His small patrimony wasted away, and his wife and ten children were on the verge of poverty when he appealed to Wolsey for some government office at Calais. His daughter Catherine was received into the

* Privy Council Report; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry; White-Kennet.

family of her father's stepmother, the Duchess Dowager of Norfolk, an eccentric lady, who, to some extent, neglected the education of her ward.* In the private examination of witnesses before the Privy Council, persons were produced who were devoid of a shred of character, and of this fact Cranmer was aware. The investigation before the Privy Council was merely a deceptive formula, marked by treachery and perjury. Miss Strickland reluctantly admits that Catherine Howard was an object of distrust to Lord Hertford's party. In another passage the same author alludes to the diplomatic tact used in organising plans for the downfall of the Queen.†

Queen Catherine was quickly ordered for execution—"Poor little Catherine," as she was called—and Lady Rochford, the latter of whom, although she died grandly, did not deserve, from her antecedents, to meet death in such company, conducted herself in her last moments with the fortitude, meekness, and piety of a Christian. Otwell Johnson, an eye-witness of the tragedy, wrote to his brother in these quaint words: "Their sowles, I doubt not, be with God; for they made the most godly and Christyan's end that ever was heard tell of, I think, since the world's creation." All of those around the scaffold are described as appearing to suffer far more than the victims. "Sobs and sighs of heartfelt sympathy were the last sounds that fell upon the ears of Queen Catherine." When Dr. Longland, her confessor, informed her that she had only "three days to live," she appeared calm and resigned; and placing a crucifix in her right hand, addressed

* *Queens of England*, vol. iii.† *Ibid.*, p. 129.

Dr. Longland in these words : " As to the act, my reverend lord, for which I stand condemned, God and His holy angels I take to witness, upon my soul's salvation, that *I die guiltless, never having proved unfaithful as a wife to my husband*, the King. What other sins and follies of youth I have committed, I will not excuse ; but I am assured that for them God hath brought this punishment upon me, and will in His mercy remit them, for which I pray you pray with me unto His Son and my most adorable Saviour, Jesus Christ."*

Dean Hook attributes no "unkindness" to Archbishop Cranmer for the part he took against Catherine Howard ; yet he admits that the accusations against her *were not proved* ; that every thing tends to show that she was not guilty of adultery ; and that she, "as the King's consort, conducted herself with great propriety." In another passage Dean Hook makes an effort to excuse Cranmer's actions at this time. "The Archbishop came to town for the purpose of defending the Queen, but some dreadful revelations reached him." From what quarter ? Was it from the Duke of Suffolk, or from Lord Hertford—both avowed enemies of the Queen, and the confidential friends of the Archbishop of Canterbury ? To say that Cranmer "came to town to defend the Queen" is a statement completely contradicted by his movements and actions at the special time.

Catherine Howard's domestic story before marriage is one of the saddest of the many sad narratives which history has related of those calamitous times.

* The Bishop of Worcester's Correspondence with Dr. Gardyner.

As a Queen, however, Catherine won the affections of the English people, and was becoming a power in the State; the members of her family were strengthening round the throne, to the discomfiture of the Primate. The King at this time hanged Catholics for gainsaying the Royal Supremacy, and burned the Reformers as heretics. But with Cranmer it was simply an affair of temporal precedence between himself and the Queen, with her surrounding.

Cranmer has been praised for denouncing to one who "loved her so fiercely" as the King the inconstancy of the Queen; but the latest research has failed to discover, as I have said, more reliable warranty for the charge against Catherine Howard than the incitement of selfishness and faction.

Lady Rochford, when her own time came, averred solemnly on the scaffold, that in all the testimony she had given against Anna Boleyn and her fellow-victims, *there was not a particle of truth!* Lady Rochford was executed on the plea of having concealed from the King the alleged inconstancy of the Queen.

The case of Catherine Howard exceeded in injustice and cruelty even that of Anna Boleyn; Catherine was impeached upon rumours and executed without trial. Who can vindicate such a proceeding?

At the period written of, justice and mercy lay buried in the same grave with law and precedent; and one tyrant will ruled supreme. It was a time when, in the words of Sir James Mackintosh, "although guilt afforded no security, virtue was the surest way to destruction." The King, for the sake of our repute of whatever human feeling remained

in him, must be considered to have believed the charge against the beautiful child-wife of seventeen, and the revulsion was death to her and wide-spread calamity to her illustrious house.

I pass over the narratives of Lord Herbert and Burnet, respecting Catherine Howard, for there are no trustworthy documents to verify them. Sharon Turner, writing so far later, with a number of subsequently-discovered papers at hand—if he chose to examine them—states that the evidence of Catherine's guilt was "quite clear, indisputable, and acknowledged."* Then why was Catherine impeached alone? Why did she not receive an open trial? and why not produce witnesses to establish her alleged guilt? Why not satisfy the country and posterity as to the equity of the King's proceedings? Cranmer and the Seymours were the only persons who could explain the mysterious story, for Lords Suffolk and Southampton withdrew from the proceedings. The fact is that Catherine Howard earned the deadly enmity of the Archbishop and his party, when she told him that she "could not receive Holy Communion from the hands of a *married Archbishop*." Safer for her had she kept her scruples silent, and had paltered in a double sense; but as a conscientious woman, feeling likewise as a Queen, she could not act so. From that moment the fate of Catherine Howard was sealed.

A few words as to the domestic life of Catherine Howard. She made no display of regal splendour when Queen. There is no record extant of her indulging in love of dress, or the purchase of costly jewellery, or squandering money on

* Turner's History of England, vol. x. p. 510.

favourites, like some of her predecessors. Of her education, little can be said ; but she was far from being so deficient as some authors allege. Miss Strickland speaks of her in some passages almost with scorn and contempt ; and seems to forget that the accusations against the unfortunate Queen *were never proved*.* Catherine was charitable and condescending ; listening to the "troubled stories" of the humble and lowly, which tended to make her very popular ; but at the same time the Royal lady never forgot that she belonged to the illustrious House of Norfolk, and, above all, that she was the consort of England's King.

Shortly after the disposal of the King's fifth wife, another circumstance occurred which further illustrates the readiness of Archbishop Cranmer to comply with every caprice of his master. "The King's Book," in which Transubstantiation was emphatically taught, was drawn up and published, and Cranmer, who had secretly denied that great principle of the Church of Rome, now actually revised and approved of the work ; and further *commanded it to be published in every diocese and followed by every preacher*.†

Archbishop Cranmer was now in a rather critical position. In a conversation between King Henry and himself respecting the "numerous broils and riots" about religious tenets, the King said : "I am informed, by a great many hands,

* In a later volume of the Queens of England, in alluding to the scandal concerning young Elizabeth and Sir Thomas Seymour, Miss Strickland makes the *amende* to the memory of the much-injured Catherine Howard. "It is possible that the actual guilt incurred [alleged!] by the unhappy Queen, Catherine Howard, in her girlhood, did not amount to a greater degree of impropriety than the unseemly romping which took place almost every day at Chelsea, between the young Princess Elizabeth and the bold, bad husband of Catherine Parr."—Queens of England, vol. v. p. 116.

† See Wilkins, Conc. iii., 868 ; Strype's Memorials, vol. i. ; Collier, vol. v.

that you are 'the grand heresiarch;' that it is you who encourage heterodoxy; and that were it not for your counterpases, the Six Articles had not been so much disliked and contested in your province. I therefore desire you will deal clearly, and discover yourself upon this matter."* The Archbishop replied with the apparent candour and humility which always characterised his interviews with Henry. Prostrating himself before the Monarch, he said, "That with all devotion and loyalty to the King he was still of the same opinion respecting the Six Articles; nevertheless, he had done nothing as Archbishop of Canterbury against the enforcement of the law."

It was a strange confronting of the two. The King came close to the Archbishop, and, looking in his face with an air of pleasantry and banter, asked, "Could the Archbishop of Canterbury's bedroom stand the test of the Six Articles?"† Cranmer blushed, but admitted that he was *a married man before his promotion to the See of Canterbury*; that he entered into matrimony during his visit to Rome and Germany; but in order to obey the Six Articles he had sent his wife home to her family.‡

It is needless to indicate the right of King Henry to find fault with his Archbishop on the score of marriage-law, or morality in any form. He was aware of the fact that Cranmer had a wife and a disreputable female acquaintance

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

† *Ibid.*

‡ In Strype's *Memorials of Cranmer* (vol. ii.) are printed the forms of "restitution" to be made by a priest who married, and, repenting for having broken his vows, was received back again by his Bishop. Several priests of the province of Canterbury appeared before Archbishop Cranmer under such circumstances, "supplicating his forgiveness." When the ceremony was over, it is probable the sympathising prelate gave them the comfort and advice which he tendered to Alexander Alesse, in Lambeth Palace.

at a very short period from one another. But, of course, he could not proceed on his work of religious confiscation without his "wise counsellor," as he styled Cranmer; and, placing a ring on the prelate's finger, as a testimony of his friendship, the monarch departed, and his theologian triumphed for the time.

I here take leave of Osiander's niece. The young and hapless Marguerite, with the "bright eyes and pretty mouth," was the most unhappy matron in the neighbourhood of Lambeth. Unacknowledged by law as the wife of the Archbishop of Canterbury, unrecognised by the usages of society, her life was a furtive existence, if not a prolonged endurance of self-abasement. To a woman of sensitive feeling, the condition of marriage, with a disavowed claim, must have been one of misery. She could not appear in public to enjoy the holiday pageants so common to the time, in which the servants of her household might indulge. The contrast was too striking for the people, who had not been disciplined to the sudden change of celibate priests to married archbishops. Unenlightened as were the masses, it shocked their preconceived notions to behold a mutation, as they traditionally thought so fearful, in the lives of their spiritual teachers. They saw the men who had sworn at the altar to observe chastity, self-absolved, and not only taking unto themselves wives, but abetting polygamy, and escheating, by false evidence, the possessions of the poor. No marvel, then, that an episcopal helpmate was regarded as something formidably strange—an object of avoidance. Concubinage was, however, in a manner tolerated by the looseness of the age; but a "bishop's wife" was a woman against whom the Reformers themselves

felt a certain amount, to use their most delicate phrase, of "unpleasant feeling." Even the removal of the Six Articles did not alter the position in society of a priest's or a bishop's wife. There is little or no foundation, doubtless, for many of the coarse anecdotes related by Sander and other Catholic writers, as to the "degraded condition" of Mrs. Cranmer; but her position was sad enough. In her second marriage, however, Mrs. Cranmer was more happy than in her first. Still young and handsome, and devoid of the Puritan fanaticism which characterised many of the "Reforming women" of her day, she was more suited to become the wife of the frank-hearted and hospitable printer, Edward Whitchurch, than that of a jealous-minded old man, whom she never loved or regarded with even the outward feelings of a consort. Her early love story would form material for an interesting romance.

Like Wolsey, Thomas Cranmer had many pleasing associations of early life to look back upon—days when innocence and hope had shed a "bright and holy sunshine on his soul." A good son, a good brother, and "abounding in benevolence," he had been sought after by the needy and the unfortunate. As the son of a country squire, he had been popular with the people for his love of field sports. Jacob Thornton, a fellow student, reports that "Young Maister Cranmer, in the private circles of Cambridge, won golden opinions; and there were others besides Black Joan, on whom the charms of his conversation had made an impression." His vocation, however, was *not* that of the Church, and it would have been well for his fame, his honour, and his happiness, had he never become a priest.

The spiritual powers claimed by King Henry, and

approved of and carried out by Archbishop Cranmer and his coadjutors, have been clearly defined by Macaulay in one of his powerful Essays upon the Reformation epoch. The noble author observes :

“ The founders of the English Church wrote and acted in an age of violent intellectual fermentation, and of constant action and reaction. They often contradicted each other, and sometimes contradicted themselves. That the King was, under Christ, sole Head of the Church, was a doctrine which they all with one voice affirmed ; but those words had very different significations in different mouths, and in the same mouth at different conjunctures. Sometimes an authority which would have satisfied Hildebrand was ascribed to the Sovereign ; then it dwindled down to an authority little more than that which had been claimed by many ancient English Princes who had been in constant communion with the Church of Rome. What Henry and his favourite counsellors meant, at one time, by the Supremacy, was certainly nothing less than the whole power of the ‘ Keys.’ The King was to be the Pope of his kingdom, the Vicar of God, the expositor of Catholic verity, the Channel of Sacramental graces. He arrogated to himself the right of deciding dogmatically what was orthodox doctrine and what was heresy, of drawing up and imposing confessions of faith, and of giving religious instruction to his people. He proclaimed that all jurisdiction, spiritual as well as temporal, was derived from him alone, and that it was in his power to confer episcopal authority and to take it away. He actually ordered his seal to be put to commissions by which bishops were appointed, who were to exercise their functions as his deputies, and during

his pleasure. According to this system, as expounded by Cranmer, the King was the spiritual as well as the temporal chief of the nation. In both capacities his Highness must have lieutenants. As he appointed civil officers to keep his seal, to collect his revenues, and to dispense justice in his name, so he appointed divines of various ranks to *preach the Gospel and to administer the Sacraments*. It was unnecessary that there should be any imposition of hands. The King—such was the opinion of Cranmer given in the plainest words—might, in virtue of authority *derived from God, make a priest; and the priest so made needed no ordination whatever*. These opinions the Archbishop, in spite of the opposition of the Courtly divines, followed out to every legitimate consequence. He held that his own spiritual functions, like the secular functions of the Chancellor and Treasurer, were at once determined by a demise of the Crown. When Henry died, therefore, the Primate and his suffragans took out fresh commissions, empowering them to ordain and to govern the Church till the new Sovereign should *think fit to order otherwise*. When it was objected that a power to bind and to loose, altogether distinct from temporal power, had been given by our Lord to His Apostles, some theologians of this school replied that the power to bind and to loose had descended, not to the clergy, but to the whole body of Christian men, and ought to be exercised by the chief magistrate as the representative of society. When it was objected that Saint Paul had spoken of certain persons whom the Holy Ghost had made overseers and shepherds of the faithful, it was answered *that King Henry was the very overseer, the very shepherd whom the Holy Ghost had appointed, and to whom the expressions of Saint Paul applied!*"

Macaulay's commentary on Cranmer's policy is worthy of consideration. "The man who took part in settling the conditions of the alliance which produced the Anglican Church was Archbishop Cranmer. He was the representative of both parties, which, at that time, needed each other's assistance. He was at once a divine and a courtier. In his character of divine, he was perfectly willing to go as far in the way of change as any Swiss or Scottish Reformer. In his character of courtier, he was desirous to preserve that organisation which had, during so many ages, admirably served the Popes of Rome, and might be expected now to serve equally well the purposes of the English Kings and their Ministers. His temper and his understanding eminently fitted him to act as mediator. Saintly in his professions; unscrupulous in his dealings; zealous for nothing; bold in speculations; a coward and a time-server in action; a placable enemy and a lukewarm friend, he was in every way qualified to arrange the terms of the coalition between the religious and worldly enemies of the Papacy."

In this strain Macaulay writes of Thomas Cranmer. In a preceding passage, the noble historian forcibly explains the relations in which the Church of England, through the advice and intervention of Cranmer, stood with regard to the Crown.

Macaulay becomes indignant at the claims for sanctity ascribed by many writers to Cranmer. "When an attempt is made to set Dr. Cranmer up as a saint, it is scarcely possible for any man of sense, who knows the history of the times, to preserve his gravity."*

* Macaulay's *Essays on the English Reformation*.

It is almost incredible how some writers of established reputation contradict themselves in their written labours, and confound the good and evil attributes of the portraits of their pen—proceeding through many a page of condemnatory, though unconscious, fact, to conclude with a peroration of eulogy to which events afford no basis. Dean Hook says: "*At the end of Henry's reign Cranmer might look back with some satisfaction to his past career as an ecclesiastic.*"*

As an ecclesiastic! Would the good and ingenuous Dean dis sever the man from the ecclesiastic? or are the hypocrisy, sacrilege, and time-serving dishonesty of a man to be considered distinct from his characteristics as a priest? The Dean answers the question in a brief sentence in volume vii. page 10:—"In his *worst actions, Henry found an instrument in Cranmer.*" There is a volume in those few words.

Amongst English historical writers, Cranmer's advocates are numerous; yet many of them make marvellous admissions as to his "weakness and inconsistency," and all approach the part he took in the divorce of Queen Catherine with evident reluctance. Here one historian in too many instances conceals or mystifies truth, in order to produce a sectarian hero with few faults, and according to other historians perfectly faultless. For instance, John Foxe "feels certain that Archbishop Cranmer ranks next to *St. Paul in the estimation of Christ*. Cranmer's great mission was to strike down Popery. He was a *real saint, as well as a martyr for God's Word*. He is now in the *Glory of Heaven, amongst the valiant army of Christ's soldiers.*"

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 209.

John Bale's opinion of Cranmer might be of some interest to those admirers of the Archbishop, who happen to know nothing of Bishop Bale, who becomes his champion in the following primitive fashion:—"In the midst of wicked Babylon," writes Bale, "Archbishop Cranmer always performed the part of a good guide of Israel. Amongst the Papists that tyrannised against the truth of Christ, the good and holy Archbishop of Canterbury governed the people of God with an admirable prudence." This is lamentable eulogy from an indescribably profligate encomiast.

Peter Martyr, who sometimes dissented from Dr. Cranmer, "demanding a bolder front to the Papists," states that the Archbishop's "godliness, prudence, truth, and singular virtues were known to the whole kingdom; that he was *so adorned with the grace and favour of Christ*, as that, though all others are the children of wrath, yet in him piety and divine knowledge, and other virtues, might seem to be naturally born and bred."

John Speed draws a glowing picture of the saintly Archbishop. "He was a *second St. Paul*."

Burnet considers Dr. Cranmer as "a man *raised up by Providence* to purify religion and remove from it the blighting errors of Popery."*

John Strype was, perhaps, one of the most fervent adulators of Cranmer who wrote on the Reformation epoch. "The Papists," said Strype, "not contented with the shedding of the Archbishop's blood, are also resolved to stigmatise his name and memory, and fain make the

* Burnet's Reformation, vol. i.

world believe that he was one of the vilest wretches that lived, whilst in reality he was one of the best men and holiest bishops that age produced.”* Oldmixon considers Cranmer as “a second St. Paul,” or at least “a sound Protestant saint.” Carte affirms that “Dr. Cranmer was a man of an open and generous temper, exemplary and unaffected piety; of great abilities, learning, and judgment; and indefatigable in his searches after truth.”† Archbishop Parker, we are assured, had “an exalted opinion of Cranmer.” Jewell, Barlow, Horne, Sandys, Grindal, Whitgift, Hutton, Bancroft, Abbott, Laud, Sharpe, Tenison, and prelates of a later time, preached sermons and wrote essays on the life of Cranmer—all attributing to him “saintly manners and *the glory of pulling down the Roman Church in England.*” Amongst those who joined in this apotheosis in Ireland were Brown, Loftus, Curwin, Ussher, and other bishops—clerics excommunicated from one creed, sent to the “step-sister country,” to make good members of another creed. But Spencer, Raleigh, and, later still, the astute Strafford, admitted that that effort was an utter fiasco.

John Bale, and Horn, Bishop of Winchester, boasted to Frederic Debac, a German preacher, “that they daily drunk to the immortal memory of Thomas Cranmer, who overturned the Papal devices in England.” The German Reformers were divided in opinion as to the merits of Cranmer. Very few of them, however, approved of his conduct in relation to the divorce of King Henry’s wives—in fact, many

* Strype’s Cranmer, vol. i. p. 671.

† Carte’s History of England, vol. iii. p. 671.

German Reformers expressed their indignation at the readiness with which the Archbishop adopted his Royal master's views in the divorce of his wives.

I have now traced Dr. Cranmer's career down to the last days of Henry VIII.—no pleasing or grateful task—and leave the English reader to judge of the Archbishop's deserts by the State Papers, and the well-certified records of his contradictory actions as a prelate and as an adviser of King Henry VIII. Of course, his sad historic name appears again and again upon the scene in succeeding chapters, till the period of his final fall in Queen Mary's reign.

CHAPTER III.

WHO WERE THE ACCUSERS OF THE MONASTIC HOUSES?

MR. BISSETT, in his valuable work, entitled "Omitted Chapters of the History of England," states "that there is no part of history where truth has been more systematically kept out of sight than in the history of Scotland." Mr. Bissett refers to the history of Scotland subsequent to the Reformation. I have no hesitation in stating as my conviction, after the research of many years, that the above observations are, if possible, more applicable to the history of the Reformation in England, and, above all, as to the character of the commissioners and the motives of the monastic inquisition.

The inquiry into the moral character of the religious houses was a mere pretext, a complete delusion, an insidious and predetermined foray of wholesale and heartless plunder. Reckless and unprincipled as Henry Tudor was, he sometimes paused before action; but his councillors hesitated never. In fact, the dominant laity of all periods were but too ready to oppress the Church. The Venerable Bede makes special mention of this sacrilegious feeling pervading the possessors of influence in his time. The first Parliamentary proposal to confiscate Church lands was made by the House of Commons in 1412, when they presented an

address to Henry the Fourth on the subject.* The King was displeased at the proposition, and would not hear of such a scheme. The Peers endorsed the Monarch's opinion. In a few years later, the Commons returned to the question, and besought the King and the Peers to consider the propriety of taking a "goodly proportion" of the lands then in the hands of Churchmen. They made the following extraordinary proposal to the Crown:—

"A sum of 20,000*l.* a year to the King, for his own private purse; to create fifteen new earls, and to confer on each of them a certain portion of the said lands; fifteen hundred knights were to spring into existence, and to be each allowed some certain lands to uphold his position; six thousand esquires were also to receive an increase to their domains. The 'surplus,'† after satisfying all these demands, was to be devoted to building and endowing one hundred hospitals, and to give the sum of *seven marks each for the support of fifteen thousand secular priests.*"‡

In one point of view, these would-be escheators were possessed of more humanity than Henry VIII. and his "Reforming suggestors," for whilst the communistic scheme of Henry of Lancaster's Commons proposed the endowment of *one hundred hospitals*, Henry Tudor and his Parliament confiscated the substance which the benevolence of former generations bequeathed for the support of *one hundred and ten hospitals*. Whatever were the evil deeds of Henry the

* According to a Parliamentary return of 1412, the yearly value of Church lands in England was 485,100 marks.

† It might have been difficult to ascertain from whence "the surplus" was to be derived, for the sale of all the domains and revenues of the Church at that time would not yield anything like a sufficient sum to carry out the scheme proposed. The statistics upon this subject are still extant.

‡ Rymer, vol. viii. p. 627; Otterbourne, p. 267.

Fourth, he certainly wished to maintain the religious institutions of the country. He severely reprimanded the Commons for "coveting their neighbours' goods," and hinted that revolution and Lollardism—the latter one of the earlier names for Communism—formed the basis of the entire movement. Time proved that the astute Monarch was right.

It is strange that nearly all the old chronicles are silent as to the efforts to confiscate Church property in the reign of Henry the Fourth. Walsingham, the historian above quoted, was a contemporary, and himself a priest. In the reign of Henry the Fifth the Lollard Communist party in the House of Commons again petitioned the King to confiscate the property of the Church; but the young King, having lately suppressed the outbreak of the lunatic rebel, Lord Cobham, and his Lollards, rejected the proposition with contempt.* A close investigation of the history of the Lollard movement proves that their designs were "political and levelling." Hume considers that "the Lollards were dangerous to the Church, and very formidable to the State"—a sentence thoroughly understood by all conservative readers. Several Puritan writers contend that the Lollards were the "original Protestants." Historians of a later date write more common sense—Dean Hook, for instance. The research of the Dean upon this question led him to the conclusion that the Lollards were powerful in the Parliament of Henry the Fourth, and he adds: "The proposition made by the Commons to the King was a Lollard measure to transfer the property of the monks and clergy

* See Walsingham, Hall, Polydore Vergil, and Holingshead.

to the lay Lords.”* In another passage Dean Hook deals with the delusion under which certain sections of posterity labour as to what the Lollards really represented. “When,” he says, “we speak of the Lollards as martyrs, we ought to regard them as a kind of political martyrs rather than religious; *they made religion their plea, in order to swell the numbers of the discontented; but their actions all tended to a revolution in the State as well as in the Church.* . . . The Lollards directed their first attacks upon the Church because the Church was the most vulnerable part of the Constitution. But the civilians—the citizens and people—were quite as much alarmed at their proceedings as the ecclesiastics. Both the Church and the State regarded the principles of the Lollards as *subversive of all order in things temporal as well as in things spiritual.*”†

It is paying a poor compliment to Protestantism to claim Lollardism for its precursor. Dean Hook protests against such an odious connection for the Church of England; whilst Mr. Froude holds a different opinion. He considers the Lollards somewhat in the light of the “Hot-Gospel” Puritans of Germany—those “original saints,” of whom Leopold Ranke relates so many unedifying details.

But let it be remembered that the Lollards *proposed no new religion*; having no particular faith on hand, they demanded an “administrative reform in the Church;” they were men of bad morals, who scoffed at all religious control; they denounced marriage as the “badge of Popish slavery;” they had some confused ideas as to a divorce

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. iii. p. 72.

† Ibid., vol. iii. p. 95,

tribunal, and quoted Scripture to sustain their "liberty of conscience." They spoke in the vilest language of ecclesiastics of the most stainless lives ; every man who possessed property was held up as a villain and a hypocrite ; morality in men and chastity in women were described as the hypocrisy suggested by monks and friars. In fact, all that was honest and virtuous in the land repudiated them : and, after a while, the system was stamped out with the full assent of an indignant nation.

Now, as to the "Lollard movement" of the sixteenth century. Mr. Froude, adopting the statements put forward by Burnet and Strype, contends that "the object of the King and Cromwell was to *reform* and not to *destroy* the monastic houses ; and that it was only when reformation was found to be conclusively hopeless, that the bolder alternative was resolved upon."* This statement is completely at variance with every circumstance connected with the Inquisition. It is really astounding to find men making such allegations in the face of well-attested facts. The learned Sir William Dugdale, who must always be considered a high authority respecting the monastic houses, has averred that the whole question as to the mode of confiscation had been arranged some years previously. This statement is sustained by a crowd of circumstances. There are still extant documents to prove that extensive bribes of lands were offered to members of both Houses of Parliament to induce them to vote for the dissolution of the religious houses. The King's Council having made their arrangements with the venal Parliament then in existence,

* Froude's Hist. of England, vol. ii. p. 413.

brought in a Bill to *legalise* the spoliation and plunder already committed by the Monarch. The whole affair was a flagrant violation of the statute law and constitution. The vested rights of the monastic houses were as firmly fixed and acknowledged by the laws and constitution of the realm as the monarchy itself, for the "rights and privileges of the monastic houses had been fully confirmed by *thirty Parliaments legally convened*."* Why not dissolve the Parliament, and place the question before the country for "Yes or No?" The Parliament which confirmed the King's confiscations had no legal power to confiscate. Mr. Froude's defence of the confiscations, and the mode of action adopted by Lord Crumwell, are unworthy of consideration, when confronted with the many State Papers now at hand on the subject. Posterity have been frequently assured that the Commons "complied with the King's request, with many thanks for his goodly and pious work." This statement *is not correct*. Venal and obsequious as the Parliament were at the period, they hesitated; and many members boldly expressed their abhorrence of the monastic confiscations. The debates were renewed again and again; and members are described as speaking in pathetic language of "those institutions, where their wives and daughters were educated;" others told Sir Thomas Audley that they "would not believe in Lord Crumwell's report, because they knew that the men who furnished it swore like dicing folks, and

* See Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v.; Sir William Dugdale, Stephenson, Fuller, Brown Willis's Records of Parliaments; Turner, and Blunt. The Protestant authorities here quoted throw a flood of light upon this long-disputed question.

cared not what they said." Speed and Burnet assure their readers that Parliament agreed to the proposed confiscation without any opposition. The records of the Commons manifest the contrary. And Sir Henry Spelman, a high Protestant authority, states that "the Bill for a confiscation stuck long in the Lower House, and could get no passage. When the King himself commanded the Commons to attend him in the forenoon in his gallery, where he let them wait till late in the afternoon, and then, coming out of his chamber, walking a turn or two amongst them, and looking angrily on them, first on one side, then on the other, at last said, '*I hear that my Bill will not pass; but I will have it pass, or I will have some of your heads;*' and without other rhetoric, returned to his chamber. Enough was said; the Bill passed, and all was given him as he desired."* All the chronicles of the times prove that, outside the walls of Parliament, "the lamentations of the people for this fiat against the religious houses were loud and frequent."† Those who had been reduced to want knew where to apply for and find timely succour, delicately administered; the widow and the orphan were cherished as "God's own;" in fact, all whom reverse of fortune reduced to need were enabled in some measure to recover themselves; all who needed it were relieved, without, as afterwards, being branded as paupers, lashed, imprisoned, and debased, all for no fault of their own.

The Venerable Bede has left upon record his opinion as to monastic property—that "*it was intended by the*

* Sir Henry Spelman's *History of Sacrilege*.
Collier's *Church History*, vol. v.; Thorndale's *Memorials*.

thoughtful and humane donors for the nourishment of the poor, the infirm, the relief of the fatherless, and to give hospitality to the stranger." The intelligent portion of this country are now fully aware of the channels to which the property of the poor has been consigned.

Henry Hallam must be ever considered a high authority as to the character of the "Parliaments of England." Here is a brief picture of the obsequiousness and venality of the Lords and Commons in the latter part of Henry's reign:—

"Both Houses of Parliament yielded to every mandate of Henry's imperial will; they bent with every breath of his capricious humour; they were responsible for the illegal trials, for the iniquitous attainders, for the sanguinary statutes, for the tyranny which they sanctioned by law, and for that which they permitted *without law*. Nor was this selfish and pusillanimous subserviency more characteristic of the minions of Henry's favour—the Crumwells, the Ryders, the Pagets, the Russells, and the Pauletts; the representatives of ancient and honourable names—such as the Norfolks, the Arundels, the Shrewsburys, were the supporters of the King's policy. We trace these noble statesmen concurring in all the inconsistencies of the reign, and supporting all the changes of religion; constant only in the rapacious acquisition of estates and honours from whatever source, and in adherence to the present power. Henry VIII. hated all Parliaments just as much as Charles I. and his Minister, Lord Strafford. The Tudor tyrant carried out his plans by a code of pains and penalties so horrible as to affright every class of society; and when the nation became reduced to this abject and cowardly condition the King imbrued his hands in the best blood of the land; and he plundered his subjects on a scale never before known in any civilised country."*

It is an unpleasant task to investigate the character and

* Hallam's Constitutional History of England, vol. i. p. 51.

proceedings of the Monastic Inquisitors, but fidelity to truth demands it with the exigency of fact. Richard Layton and Henry Leigh received their early education in one of Wolsey's palaces—establishments that might be called in those days schools of refined learning. Those men subsequently became spies under Crumwell upon the Cardinal's domestics. Some time before Lord Crumwell disclosed to the King his plans for a visitation of the Monastic houses, he held many conferences with these "high-spirited young men," as Mr. Froude styles them; and they being in holy orders, Crumwell, with his usual forethought and cunning, considered their report, or written evidence, more valuable. The Grand Inquisitor had also an interview with Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, and Lord Clinton; they, of course, approved of the plans suggested. Archbishop Cranmer was then the bosom friend of Lord Crumwell, and we may judge how far he adopted Crumwell's views. Nothing was done in a hurried manner. "It is a dreadful undertaking," said Lord Clinton. "Ah, I have great faith in the tact and judgment of the men I am about to select," was the reply of Lord Crumwell. Piers Dutton, the "Rev. Dr. London," and a secular priest named Rice, who had been unfrocked for misconduct, were likewise consulted. Harmony existed between those Inquisitors; there was no dissension. Henry Griffin—a good authority with respect to the movements of Lord Crumwell at this time—says: "I was acquainted with all the Commissioners; indeed, I knew them well; they were very smart men who understood the value of money, for they had tasted of adversity; they could make plausible statements, and swear to what they said if it was considered necessary. I think the *priests*

were the very worst of the whole party, although they had a good reputation at the time, but they were wicked, deceitful men. I am sorry to speak thus of my own order, but I speak God's truth."* Fuller observes: "The Inquisitors were men who well understood the message they were sent on, and would not come back without a satisfactory answer to him that sent them, knowing themselves to be no losers thereby." Thomas Fuller merely repeats the general opinion of the Inquisitors' contemporaries, and even of those who were most hostile to the Monastic houses. In our own days, Dean Hook remarks that "the Inquisitors knew what was expected at their hands, and they did not deceive the expectations of their employers." Dean Layton made many suggestions as to how they should report on the condition of the abbeys, declaring his belief that "they were all in a state of crime."† Crumwell appeared to hesitate; he spoke of retiring from office; that his mother, whom he esteemed very much, "had an everlasting regard for the nuns." "By the sweet face of the Virgin Mother," exclaimed Crumwell with some warmth, "Maister Layton, I do not believe what you say concerning many of the nunneries."‡ Lord Crumwell took a week to further consider the matter. In the meantime he received a letter from Layton, pointing out the enormous quantity of gold and silver, jewels, and other valuables possessed by the Monastic houses; also the amount of cultivated land, and how it might be disposed of. The picture was drawn in a

* Griffin's Chronicle—a very scarce Black Letter Book.

† Froude, vol. ii.; MS. in Rolls House.

‡ Thorndale's Memorials of the English Abbays.

manner to tempt the sordid yet hesitating mind of Crumwell. At the end of the week the apparent scruples of the Grand Inquisitor vanished, and he was prepared with a programme of his plans to lay before the King.* The Royal assent was given to the scheme. But it is only fair to remark that the real mode in which the investigation was conducted was never imparted to Henry. He was deceived at every step by Crumwell and his advisers.

Mr. Froude admits that Leigh and Layton were accused of having "borne themselves with *overbearing insolence, and to have taken bribes, and, when bribes were not offered, to have extorted them from the houses which they spared.*"† The houses which they spared! For what length of time were they spared? How many weeks or months? Again, Mr. Froude says: "That they went through their business roughly is exceedingly probable." In another passage he remarks: "Doubtless their other proceedings were *both rash and blameable.*" An extraordinary admission when coming from such a persistent advocate. Mr. Froude also believes, "it is probable that they *took money as bribes, because they candidly admitted that they did so.*" The high-minded Commissioners are very kindly excused by Mr. Froude, on the plea that officials in those times were poorly paid. But there are "proofs" that they helped themselves plentifully. Mr. Froude further acknowledges a fact, which the State Papers record, that the "assistants or servants" of Leigh, Layton, London, Rice, and the other Commissioners "had ridden along the highways *decked in*

* Dean Layton's Letter to Sir William Paget.

† Froude's Hist. of England, vol. iii. p. 97.

the spoils of the desecrated chapels, with copes for doublets, tunics for saddle-cloths, and the silver relic cases hammered into sheaths for their daggers."* These were desecrations and robberies which King Henry would scarcely have sanctioned, at that time at least; they were perpetrated in many instances by spendthrift squires and sacrilegious monks—not the servants of the Inquisitors as they have been represented.† Dr. Burnet declares them to be "zealous adherents of the pure Gospel." Mr. Froude sets down the Inquisitors as men "*burning with Puritan indignation at the immoralities of the monasteries.*" How often does Mr. Froude repeat the allegation that Crumwell's inquisitorial mercenaries burned with Puritan zeal instead of with the greedy fervour of subsidised dishonesty? There was neither Puritanism nor Protestantism entertained by any of the men, high or low, engaged in these flagitious proceedings. However, if Mr. Froude will claim those sacrilegious plunderers as the pioneers of Puritanism, he is welcome to their accession, though reputable or right-minded "Dissent" can scarcely thank him for the appropriation. In another passage Mr. Froude contends "that the practices of the Romish creed were departed from—that the fasts and abstinences were little observed,"‡ whilst Dr. Brewer, who has waded through so vast an amount of contemporary records, avers as the result of *his* researches, that the fasts

* This statement is to be found minutely recorded in a MS. in the Rolls House State Papers. Another MS. in the Rolls House describes the vestments as converted into saddle-clothes (MSS. 402).

† Thorndale's *Memorials of English Abbays*.

‡ Froude's *Hist. of England*, vol. iii.

were far better observed in England in those days than in France.*

Could this most recent teacher of English history have relented, or are the historian and the lecturer bipartite beings? Thus, Mr. Froude disserts upon the Monastic houses about the early part of 1867, when he delivered a lecture at Manchester on this much-misrepresented question—the character of the Monastic Orders. “Never,” said Mr. Froude, “in all history, in ancient or modern times, that they knew of, had mankind known out of themselves *anything so grand, so useful, so bountiful as the Catholic Church once was. . . .* Wisdom, justice, self-denial, nobleness, purity, high-mindedness—those were the qualities before which the free-born races of Europe had been contented to bow; and in no order of men were such qualities to be found as they were found six hundred years ago in the clergy of the Catholic Church. They called themselves the successors of the Apostles; they claimed in their Master’s name universal spiritual authority, *but they made good their pretensions by the holiness of their lives.* They were allowed to rule, because they deserved to rule; and in the fulness of reverence, kings and nobles bent before a power which was nearer to God than their own. Over prince and subject, chieftain and serf, a body of unarmed, defenceless men reigned supreme by the influence of sanctity.”

In the course of the same lecture Mr. Froude further remarks: “The monasteries were another vast feature of the Middle Ages, when they were inhabited by fraternities of men who desired to devote themselves to good-

* Brewer’s State Papers—Foreign and Domestic.

ness, and who, in order the better to do so, took vows of poverty that they might not be entangled with the pursuit of money, and of chastity, that they might not be distracted with the cares of a family. Their days were spent in *hard bodily labour, in study*, or in visiting the sick; at night *they were on the stone floors of their chapels, holding up their withered hands to heaven, interceding for the souls who were suffering in Purgatory. The system spread to the farthest limits of Christendom.* The religious houses became places of refuge, where men of noble birth, Kings, and Queens, and Emperors, and warriors, and statesmen, retired to lay down their splendid cares, and end their days in peace. Those with whom the world had dealt hardly, and those whom it had surfeited with its unsatisfying pleasures—those who were disappointed with earth, and those who were filled with passionate aspirations after heaven, alike found a haven of rest in the quiet cloisters.”

How and when arose the startling changes from light to darkness? Where is the record of that universal corruption which, even on the fringe of the Middle Ages, was alleged against those sacred houses? Even Mr. Froude must acknowledge that the Catholic Church, chiefly through its Monastic houses, had been the sole focus of intelligence; and he owes it to his credulous and much-abused following to point out the era of change from the sanctity and devotion he here so eloquently depicts to the dire wickedness which so shocked the hearts of the Inquisitors he has so much be-praised.

Let the reader ponder over the observations of Mr. Froude, as to the purity and holiness of the Catholic Church, six hundred years ago, and then contemplate the picture which

he has recently drawn of it in the Essays published in the *Nineteenth Century* of June, 1877, vol. i. p. 548. In these Essays Mr. Froude presents the murdered àBecket* and the Church in the worst possible light.

"At whatever period," writes Mr. Froude, *"we get a clear view of the Church of England, it was always in terrible need of reform. . . . In the twelfth century it has been held to have been at its best."*

Well, at the period just indicated, Mr. Froude draws a frightful picture of wickedness and depravity on the part of bishops, abbots, and the inferior clerics. The last of Mr. Froude's contradictory "Essays" appears in the *Nineteenth Century* for November, 1877, and concludes thus: "The spiritual courts under the name of 'liberty,' were allowed to develop a system of tyranny and corruption unparalleled in the administrative annals of any time or country. The English laity were for three centuries condemned to writhe under the yoke which their own credulous folly had imposed on them, till the spirit of Henry II. at length revived, and the aged iniquity was brought to judgment at the Reformation."

Now, Mr. Freeman, one of the most researchful and conscientious historians of the present day—one who has sought

* I can but very briefly refer in this work to the history of Thomas à Becket, but direct the reader to a few ancient authorities, such as Fitz-stephen, who was personally acquainted with the archbishop; Hoveden, Salisbury; Pollydore Vergil; Dugdale's Chronicle; Father Bracebridge on the Archbishop's death; Lyttelton's History of Henry II., vol. ii.; Foss's English Judges, vol. ii. p. 192; also vol. i. of the English Chancellors, by Lord Campbell, in which is to be seen a fairly written Memoir of Thomas à Becket as a politician. The most important documents in connection with the life of this great man are to be found in the archives of the old French cathedrals.

for truth, without capricious breaks of oblivious spleen—in his reliable writings, so valuable because so trustworthy and conscientious—has replied to the statements of Mr. Froude on this harsh phase of English history. Mr. Freeman is no *dilettante* as to facts, no sophist as to unknown motives, no assumer of translating dead men's impulses, but a man who has sought carefully, honestly and ably transferred to his readers the knowledge he had studiously attained. This is an equity "long sought and blessed" on the part of the historian of England. Mr. Freeman has answered Mr. Froude in the *Contemporary Review*, and represents his statements as "scandalous perversions of truth." Mr. Freeman impeaches, in almost every instance, the main statements made by Mr. Froude. "To do justice to a bishop or monk," adds Mr. Freeman, "is just what Mr. Froude can never bring himself to do."* Yet Mr. Freeman is said to belong (I know not otherwise) to a belief more hostile to the olden worship of England than that professed by the autocratic object of his criticism. But Mr. Freeman *will* have history, not rhetoric or imagery. And thus should history be written. Will the equity of all future hearts respond? It is a sacred duty to do so.

The opinions expressed by the contemporaries of the impeached communities must have some greater weight with posterity than the allegations of Mr. Froude. On the 30th of July, 1530, a document was drawn up by Parliament addressed to the Pope, on the alleged "misconduct of

* *Contemporary Review*, vol. xxxi. p. 826.

the clergy and the abuses of the Church.”* This petition to his Holiness was signed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, four bishops, twenty-two abbots, two dukes, two marquises, thirteen earls, twenty-five barons, and eleven knights. The prelates and abbots were energetic in their demand for inquiry; but the inquiry was obstructed by the King’s agents, who were then making private arrangements for the future commission entrusted to Thomas Crumwell. Launcelet Pomeroy, who was a bitter enemy to the Catholic Church, states “that the fact of twenty-two abbots demanding an investigation into the character of those over whom they presided is a strong argument in favour of their innocence. It is almost impossible,” he continues, “that men of such high character and severe discipline could have been privy to the crimes attributed to the Monastic houses by the Commissioners of Lord Crumwell. However we may abhor Popery, we must give the monks, and more especially the nuns, credit for those virtues which they really possessed.”

Very few have had the honesty or sense of charity displayed by Pomeroy in writing of Papists. To “misrepresent” seems to have been the motive generally prevalent. Burnet and Hume now and again permit a ray of truthful light to shine upon their descriptions of the convents. “Many convents of women lived in the most irreproachable manner.” Such is the statement of Gilbert Burnet. Hume draws a distinction between the monasteries and convents. He argues in favour of the nunneries as a “retreat for women whose families were dead, or whose means were limited.” “A woman of respectable family,” he says, “who failed in

* Records of Parliament.

procuring a settlement in the married state—an accident to which such ladies were more liable than women of a lower station—had really no rank which she properly filled ; a convent, therefore, was a retreat both honourable and agreeable from the inability and often want which attended the situation of such ladies.”*

The Monastic Inquisitors were ordered by Lord Crumwell to ascertain with accuracy how far the days of fasting and abstinence were observed in the religious houses ; if the rules of the respective orders were carried out, “ rising at two o’clock in some houses, and at four in the morning in others.” The conduct of the Inquisitors at many convents was both indecent and unmanly ; in fact, I cannot introduce in these pages the details of what occurred. The old nuns wept bitterly, but many young ladies acted with spirit and courage ; and Dr. London and Dean Layton received a severe personal chastisement at Shaftesbury from half-a-dozen young nuns, who beat them soundly with their sandals.† There were few of the nuns who were not possessed of articles of jewellery—family memorials, gold and silver crosses, cases for relics, &c., all of which they were compelled to give up ; others secreted their little treasure, to use the words of the Report, in “ holes and corners,” for which a diligent search was made, and, upon their detection, the owners were denounced as “ thieves, stealing that which, *in law*, belonged to the King’s Highness.” The domestics of many convents were promised money and clothing if they made certain statements on oath ; the “ servants and attendants”

* Hume’s Hist. of England (fol.), p. 220.

† Thorndale’s Memorials of English Abbeys ; Griffin’s Chronicle.

knew of what the Commissioners required "proof." In fact, the Commissioners were as deeply implicated in perjury, slander, and robbery, as their subordinates. There was no lack of virtuous indignation at the "awful discoveries;" no lack of ingenious swearing—"loose affidavits," as Lord Mansfield long afterwards mildly termed such attestations; no lack of appeals to the "Virgin Mother and to the Court of Heaven." Lord Crumwell required every accusation against the Monastic houses to be "solemnly sworn to." It is needless to add that no legal practitioner ever sustained a client's case with a greater nicety of swearing as to day, date, and circumstance than did the Monastic Inquisitors and those individuals styled "their servants and assistants." And again, to furnish the best show of likelihood, some of the reports were declared "unsatisfactory, and had to be amended," and, of course, were supplemented with the desired amount of precise and critical perjury.*

It must be remembered that all the Inquisitors, or Commissioners as they were sometimes styled, were not of the same stamp as London and Layton; and when favourable reports were returned to Crumwell, less ingenuous Inquisitors were appointed with "fresh instructions as to what was required." For instance, in the case of Polysworth Nunnery in Warwickshire, the Commissioners wrote to Lord Crumwell in its favour. They gave "a very fine character" to the abbess and nuns; "*that both by general fame and inquiry, they found the rules of the house rigidly observed.*" The Commissioners in conclusion remarked "that if the convent was suppressed the village would be ruined, and six or

* Thorndale's Memorials of English Abbeys.

seven score of families thrown out of an honest livelihood which they getteth by the convent in various ways, and the young maidens for many miles round would be friendless as the nuns alone were their real guardians." This is but one of the many proofs of what "slender facts" Mr. Froude has had to uphold his accusations against the English sisterhoods. The petitions from the people of all ranks, in many parts of the kingdom, were in favour of preserving their good neighbours and benefactors of the Monastic houses. But it is most probable that Crumwell never permitted the King to see those petitions. Many convents of nuns, in their terror, sent sums of money to Lord Crumwell "to have pity on them;" the Grand Inquisitor received their money, but was deaf to the supplications for mercy.*

The most remarkable man amongst the Monastic Inquisitors was the Rev. JOHN LONDON, Dean of Wallingford. Lord Crumwell was well aware of his private character being bad. London contracted a clandestine marriage whilst under vows of celibacy as a priest. He was unprincipled in every relation of life—a liar, a blasphemer, and an adulterer; convicted of several flagrant cases of perjury; convicted of other crimes too abominable to be placed in print; as great a gambler as King Henry himself; a fervid upholder of the Six Articles; a spy and persecutor of those Reformers whom he had once admonished to "have no intercourse with Rome;" the flatterer of Anna Boleyn, and the proximate traducer of her memory; the slanderer of Catherine Parr; the spy of Bishop Gardiner, whilst at the same time the agent of Dr. Cranmer. At a later date, when Lord Crumwell had been

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v. p. 2; Dugdale, Fuller, and Blunt.

consigned to the block, Dr. London was constituted the chief agent under the Six Articles, to ferret out holders of Protestant opinions. This office he performed with cruelty, accompanied by perjury and fraud. Under the Six Articles he consigned to the flames at Windsor three Reformers for adhering to the Shibboleth which it had pleased the Monarch to change. Lingard, judging from the weight of evidence against Dr. London, considers him to have been "dishonest and profligate." Thomas Fuller says "Dr. London was no saint;" that he was convicted of perjury, and adjudged to ride with his face to the horse's tail at Windsor.* Another Protestant writer, who "glorifies" in the results of Dr. London's mission, admits that he was condemned to do public penance at Oxford for a crime which I cannot name in these pages.† London's conduct to the abbess of Godstow and her sisterhood was that of an unmanly ruffian.‡ Even Burnet finds fault with London's conduct in carrying out the Six Articles, but does not believe that "he was the bad man described by historians." The motive for this defence is obvious. Burnet being well aware that London was the chief of the Monastic Inquisitors, and the man who drew up Lord Crumwell's ingenious report on the alleged crimes of monks and nuns, it would, of course weaken the effects of the report upon the minds of readers if they were informed that the man who inspected the abbeys and convents, and "reported thereon," was an "unmitigated liar, a dicer, a drunkard, and devoid of all sense of morality; whilst at the same time blaspheming religion

* Fuller's Ecclesiastical History, p. 314.

† Strype's Memorials, vol. i. p. 377.

‡ Lingard's Hist. of England, vol. v. p. 94.

by publicly discharging clerical duties as Dean of Wallingford.”* Gilbert Burnet must have seen Archdeacon Lowth’s memoirs of this abominable creature, and Pomeroy’s character of him, which was derived from Griffin, who was personally acquainted with London for twenty years. Lowth was a Protestant clergyman of high character. Speed, Oldmixon, and many of the “Hot-Gospel” writers, are silent as to the infamy of Dr. London at the time of Lord Crumwell’s Inquisition; but he was “thoroughly bad,” according to them, when enforcing the Six Articles. No doubt he was; but not worse than he had been in the days of his monastic visitations. Hall, Foxe, Stowe, Herbert, Pomeroy, Heylin, Collier, Soames, Jenkyns, Dugdale, Lowth, Strype, Echard, Speed, Wood, Rapin, Hume, Sharon Turner, Froude, Hook, Blunt, and many other writers, throw some light on the proceedings and character of London; yet, after all, the particulars of the Inquisition and the conduct of the chief actors are but imperfectly known. Is not the motive for the suppression, by a certain class of writers, of a description of the character of Thomas Crumwell’s Inquisitors sufficiently patent? They could not, with any show of consistency even for their too credulous readers, applaud the confiscation and destruction of the religious houses, on account of offences, the ascription of which rested solely on the evidence of men branded themselves with numerous and hideous crimes. Hence the reticence of so many sectarian writers up to very recent times. Of course it would not do to damage the witness in a cause which was to be commended and upheld. On this subject there is

* Thorndale; Piers Dutton’s Letters to Dr. London.

no authority in existence to compare with the Rev. J. H. Blunt. This learned and eminent Anglican divine has spent many years of a valuable life in searching the Public Records; his experience is not of History but of Facts, not of Opinions but of Documents. Here is a summary of that conscientious eye-witness of the proofs as to the character of the three principal Inquisitors—London, Leigh, and Layton—“That they were,” he observes, “*profligate and perjured.*” And he adds, “*The more these accusations are brought into the daylight and confronted with the accused, the less trustworthy their accusations appear.*”^{*} Further on the case will be made conclusive when we come to consider the “forged confessions” and other performances of these Inquisitors and their subordinates—men who were in every way worthy of their superiors.

THOMAS CORDEN, a gentleman of the bedchamber to King Henry, Maister Sadler, and Sir Piers Dutton, were also invested by Crumwell with the power of visiting the Monastic houses, and making reports thereon to Dr. London or Dean Layton. Corden received some manors, besides large presents, for the services he rendered to the King. He was in every way adapted to be the subordinate of Dr. London. Ralph Sadler was a young gentleman of varied ability. He is described as cunning, crafty, far-seeing, needy, sordid, and deceitful. His “religious principles” were shaped to meet the circumstances of the times. He was “a moveable Catholic,” fashioned according to the King’s views, and would consign a Protestant to the flames with as little compunction as he might send a beggar to the stocks, or hang

^{*} J. H. Blunt’s *Reformation*, vol. i.

a Papist for denying the King's Supremacy. He was engaged on an embassy to Scotland, in which he acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his Sovereign.* He fought at the battle of Musselburgh,† where he showed as much ability for military affairs as in diplomacy, and on his return to England was created a knight banneret. Lord Crumwell considered him to be a "very useful man;" Archbishop Cranmer believed him to be "too clever for his time;" and again he thought "he would make a stern gaoler or a crafty spy." Cranmer deemed it his policy to keep such men attached to his interests; but, nevertheless, the Archbishop did *not* like him. In Edward's reign Sadler openly joined the Reformers, when his fortune again ascended. Upon the accession of Mary he resumed the "religion" of the Pembrokes and Pagets; and when the reign of Elizabeth commenced, to use the words of Bishop Jewell, he "finally shook off the dust of Popery from his soul." Unhappily, these "many conversions" do not seem to have improved the good qualities of this moral Proteus. Some years later he became an important public man; but it was as the gaoler of the Queen of Scots Sir Ralph Sadler displayed the worst characteristics of his nature. A contemporary has written: "It would be difficult to say whether Sadler or Walsingham was the most cruel perse-

* In the State Papers of 1545-6, and in vol. iv. of Frazer Tytler's "*History of Scotland*," is to be seen the part taken by Maister Sadler in negotiating with Lord Cassillis for the murder of Cardinal Beaton. In the chapter upon "*Masks Removed*," I shall have occasion to refer at some length to this infamous transaction, in which King Henry and his Council were implicated.

† Maister William Cecil, then a very young man, was at this engagement, and narrowly escaped a cannon ball. What a part he was destined to play at a subsequent period!

cutor of unfortunate Mary Stuart." In one of Sadler's letters to Walsingham, he insinuates the advisability of her murder, and observes, "I see no end to this matter unless by the death of this woman I am sent to guard." In another communication he tells Burleigh, "If she moves a step out of my sight she shall not outlive it long."* In early life Sadler received many favours from Mary's mother, for which he expressed his thankfulness in a letter still extant. Seeing the danger surrounding the office of gaoler of the captive Queen he resigned his trust. He amassed large wealth, and was esteemed by the rising Puritans of his time as a "God-fearing man."† Walsingham professed much friendship for him; both were, however, equally ready to betray each other, if it suited their interest. Such was the after-life career of one of the most respectable of Crumwell's Inquisitors.

Sir PIERs DUTTON was another of the men who illustrated Crumwell's commission. He received presents, and made promises of "using his influence to conciliate the King," but he possessed no power with either the Minister or the Monarch. Burnet admits these charges to be true, and censures Dutton. The conduct of his "servants and assistants" was worthy of their master. He confined his own duties principally to the manly task of suborning the female domestics of convents. He subsequently condescended to give a general apology for his conduct. "Time disclosed," he once said, "the real character of nuns and friars, and it would have been a sin to hold faith with

* Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. iv.

† Sir Walter Scott's *Life and Correspondence of Sir Ralph Sadler*.

such bad people." Yet on his death-bed he informed Henry Griffin and Dr. Woolcey, that "*many of the reports he had made to Lord Crumwell were false, and that he felt great remorse for the character he had given some nunneries, for which he had no foundation ; that he had taken presents from the nuns, and acted with treachery in return. He hoped God would forgive him for these crimes, as well as many others.*"* Dean Hook alludes to three of the Inquisitors' "attendants and servants," who in old age made confessions as to the false charges they had preferred against many nuns. There were other men engaged in Crumwell's visitation who acted in an honest and honourable spirit, but *their* returns were suppressed, and themselves quickly superseded.

RICE, one of the Inquisitors, thus writes a confidential note to Lord Crumwell concerning a brother Commissioner, the Rev. Henry Leigh :—

"In his movements he is too insolent and *pompative*, he handleth the fathers where he cometh very roughly, and many times for small causes, as the Abbots of Bruton and Stavely, for not meeting him at the gate, when they had no warning of his coming. . . . The man is young and of intolerable insolence. In his visitation he refuseth many times 'his reward' (*bribe*), though it be competent, or that they offer him so little, and maketh them send after him such rewards as may please him. Surely religious men were never so afraid of Dr. Allen as they be of him, he useth such rough fashion with them. He hath twelve men waiting on him in livery, besides his own brother, who must be rewarded specially, and then his other servants."†

The Inquisitors sent many despatches to Crumwell

* Griffin's Chronicle ; Thorndale's Memorials ; Woolcey's Letters.

† Lord Crumwell's State Papers.

exposing the actions of each other, but the Grand Inquisitor urged them to act more in harmony, and to carry out the instructions he had given them. The Inquisitors were not aware at this time that Lord Crumwell had spies in "constant watch upon them." Crumwell naturally looked upon the Inquisitors as thieves; he had been a rogue in early life himself, and could not believe in honesty unless to avoid the meshes of the law.

Dr. LEIGH, the Inquisitor above alluded to, was a most false and unmanly slanderer of the nuns. He extorted money and jewels from several convents; he threatened the nuns with imprisonment and the rack; yet he had no grounds for making any tenable charges against the unfortunate ladies. His language to the young nuns is represented as vile.

LAYTON, the Inquisitor, enjoyed to a large degree Lord Crumwell's confidence. Anthony 'Wood—a Protestant authority—states that he did "much to please the King, and that he *pandered to his gross immorality*." His letters to Crumwell on the Monastic Commission are highly indecent, and have been evidently penned by one whose mind was familiar with immorality in its most disgusting forms.* In one of his despatches to Lord Crumwell Dean Layton says: "I will tell you something to make you laugh. . . . I feel most grateful to you for the patronage and benefits I have derived from you." . . . He tells Crumwell "how he regularly *prays for him*."† "I should

* Rev. J. H. Blunt's *Reformation of the Church of England*, vol. i.

† Several of Layton's abominable letters are amongst the crowd of communications to Lord Crumwell still extant.

be nothing," he says, "but a basket-bearer were it not for your goodness. God reward you."* From his obscurity, in a brief period, Lord Crumwell's interest raised Layton to some high and lucrative positions in the Church! He was Dean of Chester-le-street, Archdeacon of Buckingham, and Dean of York. He trafficked with Crumwell for Church livings—"regular money jobs," as Thorndale styles them. Whilst Dean of York he actually pledged the Church plate to an Italian Jew, so that the Chapter had to redeem it after his death, which occurred in 1543. Herbert Huddleston, of Cambridge, who knew Layton well, describes him as "a hypocrite in religion, and a knave in worldly dealings." A similar character has been given to several others connected with the Monastic Commission. Sir William Paget describes Layton's death-bed "as one of despair and horror;" "he frequently expressed his fear of meeting death."† Father Alcock, an Oxford scholar, attended Layton a few hours before his death, which took place at Brussels. Dean Hook is of opinion that the "Pilgrims of Grace" have to some extent borne out their charges of "bribery, extortion, and some abominable actions against Layton and his colleague Leigh."‡ Oldmixon contends that the "Inquisitors selected were all zealous Papists." This is merely repeating the statements of Burnet and Speed. If those men were "zealous Papists," there can be no doubt that they would never have been named as members of the Commission. It has been repeatedly alleged that the Inquisitors were all "persons of high character," but honest

* Rev. J. H. Blunt's *Reformation*, vol. i.

† Sir William Paget to the Duke of Suffolk.

‡ *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

research has proved the contrary to be the fact. Some Catholic writers, whether from mistaken sentiment, or a very erroneous sense of charity, have concealed the errors and crimes of persons of their own creed, especially *clerics*. Such a policy has often proved most detrimental to the reputation of Catholics in the eyes of their Protestant countrymen. Neither the *priest* nor the *layman* should be permitted to escape censure for becoming a traitor to the creed of his fathers, or playing a game of deception as many did in the reign of Henry. I emphatically declare as my belief that the *ultimate triumph of Truth can no more be hidden from posterity than the light of the sun*. Nevertheless, it seems almost an established maxim with some Protestant writers on the Reformation epoch to conceal or misrepresent the evil qualities of their heroes and heroines, and to blacken the reputation of those belonging to the forsaken creed. Catholics find fault with Dr. Lingard for stating the wicked part played at times by clergymen of their own creed. If that learned divine took any other course, he would be unworthy of the high character assigned to him as a historian.* An influential section of Protestants—especially of the Nonconformist class—express strong doubts of the orthodoxy, or religious sympathy, of writers like Brewer, Hamilton, Bergenroth, Stephenson, Hook, Blunt, Maitland, and Hugo, for setting down the results of their recent researches, exclaiming, “They relate many things *they should not, and place the Reformers in the worst light.*”

* Mr. Froude and Dean Hook have each spoken in terms of eulogy of the honourable and truthful manner in which Dr. Lingard approaches every subject on which he has written.

It must be remembered, however, that the facts given by these gentlemen have been but recently discovered amongst the State Papers, and it is fortunate for the cause of truth that men of such honour and probity should have been pioneers amongst the latest historical discoverers. I cannot do better on this subject than quote the opinion of Dean Maitland on the bearing and faults of Catholic and Protestant writers concerning the Reformation:—

“It is true enough,” says Dr. Maitland, “that each party abused the other, and that many keen, severe, false, and malicious things were put forth by the Roman Catholic party; but for senseless cavilling, scurrilous railing and ribaldry for the most offensive personalities, for the reckless imputation of the worst motives and most odious vices—in short, for all that was calculated to render an opponent hateful in the eyes of those who were no judges of the matter in dispute, some of the Puritan party went far beyond their adversaries. I do not want to defend the Romish writers, and I hope I have no partiality for them, or for the errors, heresies, and superstitions which they are concerned to maintain; but it really appears to be only simple truth to say that, whether from good or bad motives, they did in fact abstain from that fierce, truculent, and abusive language, that loathsome ribaldry, which characterised the style of too many of the Puritan writers.”

I have now to notice another important phase in the proceedings of the Monastic Commissioners. A number of the monks, friars, and abbots were compelled to sign documents which they had never read, and those papers were called “confessions of immorality and drunkenness, a disregard to all religion, and that, as they were so unworthy, they wished to surrender all they possessed to the King.” “Those documents,” says the Rev. J. H. Blunt, “looked like malicious forgeries got up by such profligate and unscrupulous men as London, Layton, and Leigh.” In

St. Andrew's Priory, Northampton, one of the prepared declarations of crime was presented by the Inquisitors to the monks to sign, and it received the signature of the prior and eleven of the brotherhood. In this instance, as in many others, they were assured that "it was all a matter of form;" "everything would be set right again." The monks made their offerings to the Inquisitors, and that day's proceedings closed. One of the monks was blind, and another bedridden from extreme old age. The document to which the unfortunate men signed their names was a history of horrible crimes of which it stated they there and then confessed themselves to have been guilty. It is now ascertained that this forged confession was in the handwriting of Dean Layton. Sir William Dugdale's researches enabled him to positively affirm that the signatures of some who were remarkable for the purity and holiness of their lives were placed in a prominent position as the confessors of abominable crimes. "The real fact is," observes the Rev. J. H. Blunt, "that these 'cut-and-dry' forms were put before the old monks, who, without knowing what they contained, signed them. It is quite probable that some in their despair grew indifferent to everything, as old people will, and when they were told to sign their names to a document did so." Thorndale states that the old nuns were dreadfully affrighted at the approach of Dr. Leigh. "He roared at them, and used shocking names to old women, who were all undoubted ladies, women of learning and ancient family."* A large number of the documents known as "voluntary surrenders" were forgeries.

* Thorndale's *Memorials of English Abbeys*.

Dr. Layton's treatment of the fine old Norman Abbey of Battle, in Sussex, adds, if possible, to his crimes.

There are still extant the letters of Catherine Bulkeley, the abbess of Godstow, to Crumwell, complaining bitterly of the conduct of Dr. London to herself and the sisterhood.

The returns made to Crumwell of the manner in which churches, abbeys, and libraries were demolished is more like the relation of some Oriental barbarism than that of educated Englishmen, far less of ecclesiastics. Dr. London has left on record many accounts of his visitations, which cover his name with well-deserved infamy. "At Reading," he says, "I did only *deface the church*, all the windows being full of friars, and left the roof and walls whole for the King's use. In Aylesbury I only sold the glass windows and their ornaments. . . . I left the house whole, and only *defaced the church*. At Warwick I *defaced the church windows*, the cells, and the dormitory, as I did in every place, save Bedford, *where there were few buyers*."*

I call the reader's special attention to the Vandal-like expression, "*where there were few buyers*." Few buyers for the defaced glories of the ornaments of God's Temple!

An order was issued by Lord Crumwell respecting the visitation of parish and cathedral churches to the effect that "*tin*" should be substituted for gold and silver chalices.† The confiscation of chalices was therefore somewhat enormous, the average being from six to ten at each church. Some churches had gold chalices of great value, which had been presented by parishioners and clerics at various times.

* MSS. in the Rolls House.

† Supp. of Monas., Camden Society Papers; Ellis's Original Letters.

The instructions given by Crumwell were quite in agreement with some of his memoranda, still extant. "Item, to remember *all the jewels* of all the monasteries in England, and specially for the cross at St. Paul's, of emeralds. Item, to remember my Lord of Canterbury *his best mitre* to be demanded in lieu of the King's legacy."

One of the Inquisitors, writing to Crumwell, says, "I have taken from three houses 800 ounces of plate. We have taken in the monastery of St. Edward's 5000 marks in gold and silver; also a rich cross, with emeralds, and divers stones of great value. . . . The valuables of the church of Leicester were very large. The plate weighed 190 lbs." In the account given by the King's jewel-keeper the quantity of plate thus set down is 14,531 ounces of gold; 207,635 of silver gilt, and 67,000 ounces of silver, or about nine tons of gold and silver gilt.* These returns fall far short of the real estimate of the gold and silver seized, for Crumwell and the Inquisitors made ample selections for themselves before rendering an account to the King's treasury.

Burnet states that some "base arts were used to fill up the Black Book with the crimes of religious persons."† Hume affirms that, "judging from the *motives* for the Commission, very little reliance can be placed on the Report." Lord Herbert, in his "Life of Henry VIII.," records a scene between Sir Thomas Seymour and King Henry, which throws additional light on the uses to which the

* See Ellis's Original Royal Letters, vol. ii.; Supp. of Monas., Camden Society; Blunt's English Reformation.

† I refer the reader to a very remarkable admission in Burnet (vol. i. p. 223) as to *public opinion* in relation to the monastic confiscation.

Church and Monastic property were perverted. Sir Thomas Seymour was a gentleman of the King's Privy Chamber, and like his brother, Lord Hertford, received a portion of the Monastic property; but his selfish spirit craved for more. He accordingly made a statement to his Royal master to the effect "that Archbishop Cranmer was amassing wealth for his family; that the revenues of the See were more extensive than his Highness imagined; and, as the King wanted money, he might conjecture where and how it might be procured at Croydon." The King, who was always very sharp in devising schemes for raising money, had already sent two of his spies to examine into the condition of Archbishop Cranmer's financial affairs; and discovering that Sir Thomas Seymour's allegations were false, immediately charged him with the "fabrication of a malicious lie;" "that he was actuated by unworthy motives and wished to gain another grant of Church lands." Seymour prostrated himself before the Monarch, confessing the falsehood of his charges, and imploring forgiveness. "Ah, sir," said the King, "I now perceive which way the wind bloweth. There are a sort of you whom *I have liberally given of suppressed monasteries, which, as you have lightly gotten, so you have unthriftilly spent, some at dice, others in gay apparel, and others again in a worse way I fear,** and now, when all is gone, you would fain have me make another gratuity of the Bishop's lands to satisfy your greedy appetites."

The Abbot of Vale Royal proved that the "surrenders"

* Henry here evidently alludes to Lord Clinton and Sir Francis Bryan, who were plentifully helped from the confiscated lands.

made in his name, and that of his fourteen monks, was a forgery. Nevertheless, they were turned adrift upon the world. Several of this community perished from cold and hunger. Thorndale found a learned monk of the Northampton Priory 'dead in a field. He died of hunger. Father Wilfred Lacon, an eminent Hebrew scholar, died of starvation.

The correspondence with Crumwell of Rice, the Inquisitor, is sufficiently contradictory, especially respecting his visit to the Abbot of Walden, whom he represents as "a man of good learning and right sincere judgment;" but the Abbot has an "awful secret" which his burdened conscience discloses to the man who is most likely to make it public. The Abbot has a wife and children; he "could not do without a young spouse;" the "laws of man refuse this happiness to him, but it was lawful by the ordinances of heaven to do so." . . . "He threw himself upon the mercy of the Inquisitor. . . . His case is laid before Lord Crumwell, who felt a *sympathy for his condition*; tells him to use caution and avoid scandal as much as possible."* The reader must bear in mind that, according to the Commission issued, and the "questions to be put," a violation of celibacy was one of the most fatal crimes to be attributed to "either monk, friar, or nun." This opinion was proclaimed by Crumwell himself in the King's name and in his master's presence. How, then, could he have secretly approved of the marriage of the Abbot? Besides, the ingenuous Vicar-General was always apprehensive of the monks and friars "playing some game with him in order to entrap himself

* MSS. State Paper Office, Henry VIII., S. S. vol. xxxv.

and his Commissioners.”* Crumwell suspected everybody. Self-conscious, he had no faith in the honesty of any man; and believed one of his old companions amongst the Italian brigands to have as much integrity as either prelate or prince—a doctrine he acted on or forebore just as it suited. Crumwell never made this alleged case known to the King. And, again, how did the Abbot conceal his “wife and children” from the knowledge of the monks, who were austere and rigid disciplinarians, and the hundreds of gossiping people who came daily to the monastery for milk, bread, and meat; also the old servants, the labourers, the “poor gentlemen and pilgrims,” who were constantly “coming and going?” On the very face of the statement falsehood is quite patent.†

The admission that there were “some good monks in the priory” is less worth notice than the malicious accusation—in fact, it enhances the infamy of the informer, for it was merely made for the purpose of giving an appearance of impartiality and fair play to a predetermined falsehood.

* Thorndale's Memorials.

† In vol. i. pp. 187 to 190 of Stephen's *Monastic Houses*, the reader will find the rules of the Benedictine Order, on which the government of all other houses in England was based. And, from the minute record of the mode in which these rules were carried out, every incident set down in the “Everyday-Book” of the existence of these monks, who were subordinate to the strictest code of discipline, it is utterly impossible that the crimes attributed to any house of this—in fact of any—order could have been in any shape true. Some historians of the Puritan class are persistent in stating that, in the days of the Anglo-Saxons, “ignorance and immorality were the only results of Popish teaching.” Alcuin was by no means of that opinion; and Sharon Turner, writing so many centuries later, and one of the most learned Protestant historians that England has produced, triumphantly confirms the evidence of the illustrious Father and learned scholar.

After alluding to the Monastic Inquisitors, and the overwhelming evidence contradicting their reports, Dean Hook proceeds to combat the "historical" statements put forward, and the inferences drawn from the same by other writers. "Amongst the falsehoods freely circulated were those which related to the existence of underground passages leading from priories to nunneries, for the 'clandestine convenience of those who hated the light because their deeds were evil.' But this application of the sewers, which are found upon examination to have gone no further than the exigencies of drainage required, is now known to have originated in men who, whatever may have been their zeal against Popery, had forgotten that *among deadly sins falsehood is one, and that among Christian virtues the charity which thinketh no evil is the first.*"* The learned Dean, in another touching passage, describes the "disbanded nuns" seeking a shelter from kindred and friends when driven from their legitimate homes. "It was with sad and sorrowing hearts that the pious of either sex heard of the demolition of the holy and beautiful house where their fathers had worshipped; and mothers were seen weeping as they received back their unmarried daughters from nunneries which had been to them a happy home. It was with feelings of indignant sympathy that the people of a district saw turned adrift upon the world the holy women who had been to them Sisters of Mercy."†

Dean Hook's opinion as to the moral character of the clergy—secular and regular—at the period of the Inquisition

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi.

† *Ibid.*, vol. vi.

is most important, as agreeing with, and confirming the evidence of Maitland, Brewer, Blunt, and Hugo. The Dean remarks that the clergy were not attacked on the ground of immorality. "That there were," he says, "cases where gross immorality could be produced, where reference was made to the life and conduct of ten or twelve thousand men, is not to be doubted; but these must be regarded as exceptional cases. At all events, as a body they were not arraigned." . . . And again, "It is not probable that men whose very existence as a community depended upon their upholding the laws they had vowed and sworn to enforce, would be pre-eminent in vice, as Puritan writers affirm."

Within the last twelve years documents have been discovered amongst Crumwell's private papers (yet uncalendered) which throw a fresh light upon the iniquitous proceedings of the Monastic Inquisitors. Dean Hook's long and laborious research enables him to describe the Grand Inquisitor's conduct to the nuns as "diabolical."

Mr. Froude, who admits that his hero, Henry Tudor, confiscated the property of *one hundred and ten hospitals*, alleges "that the monasteries and convents in the days of their prosperity did little for the indigent;" "they had few hospitals; no relief for the sick or decrepit. This *state of things was particularly felt in London.*"

St. James's Park originally belonged to the Hospital of St. James, but was seized upon by Henry VIII. and "enclosed." Carlo Logario speaks of St. James's Hospital in terms of commendation. The plunder of the hospitals was the most heartless of all Henry's robberies; yet an English historian of the nineteenth century has the courage to defend his

actions. Let the reader refer to the foregoing pages for the consistency of extant history.

Sir Thomas Wyatt, who was a contemporary of the men and women here misrepresented by Mr. Froude, has drawn a striking picture of their labours during the plague and the sweating sickness. He states that every convent and monastery in London contained an infirmary or hospital, with a certain number of beds for men, women, and children ; the nuns taking charge of the women and little children. At the approach of the sweating sickness the King and his Court fled from London—in fact, every one possessed of any means retired into the country ; all business was suspended ; but *the church doors were thrown open day and night for prayer ; “ the fallen and the wicked went to the confessional. The lamentations of widows and orphans were to be heard at every corner. The monks and nuns were fearless and busy in attending the sufferers, whose dreadful agonies lasted some fifteen hours before their dissolution.”* Wyatt, in a letter to Lord Leonard Gray, affirms his opinion as to the Monastic hospitals of London during this dreadful plague, which carried off nearly five thousand people in three days. On another occasion, writes Carlo Logario, “ the monks and nuns buried *eight hundred people in one morning.*”*

Thomas Wyatt, like Logario, was “ an eye-witness,” being in search of a friend who died at one of the Monastic houses. He wrote of a visit he had paid on one “ dreadful

* Carlo Logario was a Spanish physician who resided many years in London, and was well acquainted with the Monastic hospitals, of whose excellence he speaks highly in the pages of his diary. The reader is probably well acquainted with Logario from the various scenes in which he figured in the first volume of this work.

night" to the hospital of the Crutched or Crossed Friars; he was attended through the place, filled with the groans of the dying, by two friars, bearing iron crosses in their hands, and with a badge of their order, a cross of red cloth, on their grey garments. The courtly Wyatt lapsed into a reflective mood, and asked one of the Fathers if they did not fear death in such a pestilential place. "No," replied Father Anthony; "*our mission is to rescue poor souls from Satan. My son, our mission is from heaven.*" "Have any of your community died of this dreadful sickness?" inquired Wyatt. "Not one," said the monk. The thoughtless courtier stood awe-struck, when he beheld, as he relates, the "last rites ministered to the men and women about to die." In after years, when on his deathbed, Sir Thomas Wyatt gave an account to his sister, Lady Lee, of the kindness of the monks and nuns to their patients; and the gentle persuasion they used to win back to religion those terrible characters who often sought aid from them when on the brink of dissolution. Many Protestant writers have borne testimony to the labours of the Monastic houses for the sick and dying at the period of the plague.

The Rev. J. H. Blunt sums up the destruction of the Monastic houses in these words: "On the whole question it may be said that we must ever look back on that destruction as on a series of transactions in which the sorrow, the waste, the impiety, that were wrought, were enough to make angels weep. It may be true that the Monastic system had worn itself out for practical good; or, at least, that it was unfitted for those coming ages which were to be so different from the ages that were past. But slaughter, desecration, and wanton destruction, were no remedies for

its sins, or its failings; nor was covetous rapacity the spirit of reformation. *A blot and a scandal were indelibly impressed upon our history, and every bare site, every ruined gable, is still a witness to what was nothing else than a great national tragedy.*”*

How many tomes have been written upon the “oppressions of Rome” and the “cruelties of the Inquisition!” Casting off, as I do, and condemning, with utter loathing, cruelty and injustice, whose wickedness is but enhanced when perpetrated in the name of religion, which should be a merciful monitor, possibly it would be no violation of equitable judgment in all thinking men now to feel and acknowledge that not all the *auto-da-fés* of Portugal and Spain—not all the cruelties ascribed to the Santa Hermandad were fraught with more enduring evils to the poor—“God’s poor”—of a country, than were the results of that Inquisition of which Thomas Crumwell was the un-English Torquemada. That Inquisition was the origin of the debasing Poor Laws in this realm. Who can deny this fact?

* J. H. Blunt’s *Reformation of the Church of England*, vol. i. Thorndale, whom I have quoted in this and my former works, was a Flemish architect, who resided many years in England, and subsequently printed his little Black-letter Book in Brussels. He wrote with admirable brevity, and gathered many valuable facts bearing upon the destruction of the Monastic houses, and, being an architect and an antiquarian himself, he felt a special interest in the sad fate of the churches, abbeys, and libraries. He was personally acquainted with Anna Boleyn, Thomas Wyatt, and Lord Percy; Crumwell, Layton, London, and others of the Inquisitors whom he had met in Archbishop Cranmer’s dining hall. Of Cranmer’s hospitality and benevolence Thorndale speaks in glowing terms. To Thorndale I am indebted for much of my information concerning the character of the Monastic Inquisitors, whose infamous lives are yet unpublished. The real name of this author was Dominic Baptist Julian Cricitelli, the grandson of a physician of that name who resided in Mantua about the close of the fifteenth century. Thorndale (the author) died in Paris in 1560.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONVOCATION.

THE Convocations of Henry's reign appear in a painful light; they had ceased to manifest even a semblance of the independence which had formerly made their deliberations respected. But this change of action—not altogether principle—may be accounted for in the continuous threats of the King and his Ministers, whose Church patronage was bestowed for political and other services. Then the presence of Lord Crumwell and his theologian Alesse in Convocation, to represent the Monarch as Head of the Church, had the worst results. Dr. Whyte describes Crumwell's "presence there as a scandal no honest or independent priest could tolerate." The King must have abandoned all regard for the clerical character when he appointed Thomas Crumwell—an ignorant layman—to the prebend of Blewsbury, in the diocese of Salisbury; and further, the favourite was presented with the Deanery of Wells, which preferments he held till the period of his arrest and condemnation. Crumwell's endowments formed no exception to this flagrant abuse of Church patronage. Reginald Pole, when enjoying King Henry's favour, received Church livings, although he was not for many years subsequently endowed with clerical orders. At the age of seventeen he was appointed by the King Prebendary of

Roscombe and Dean of Exeter, of which endowments he received the revenues, without, of course, exercising any clerical duties.* This condition of things, evinced in many similar instances, was the natural result of the lamentable connection between the Church and Crown.

Here is another instance of a gratuitous insult offered by the King to the Church. To prevent the publication, as alleged, of "*corrupt copies of the Holy Scriptures, a special patent was granted to Lord Crumwell, which prohibited any persons from printing an English edition of the Bible, except those who were deputed by the said Lord Crumwell.*"† This command was specially intended as a blow against the bishops, of whom Crumwell was an open enemy. The Grand Inquisitor's agents were at liberty to print and circulate whatever ribaldry they pleased. Dean Maitland has fully investigated Crumwell's deeds in this respect, to which I shall refer in another chapter. When Richard Foxe, Fisher, Warham, Collet, and the men of that high school had passed away, and were succeeded by clerics like Gardyner,‡ Bonner, Roland Lee, Edward Lee, Thomas Cranmer, Edward Fox, Shaxton, Latimer, Ridley, Hooper, Layton, London, Poynet, and others of the same accommodating temperament, it is not to be wondered that division and inconsistency marked the devious deliberations of a once dignified assembly. Lord Crumwell and Archbishop Craumer carried out their programme by terror

* Rymer, xiv. 569 : *Foss's English Judges*, vol. vi. ; Rymer, xiv. p. 650.

† *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

‡ Notwithstanding Dr. Gardyner's many grave faults, he had powerful influence with the Convocation ; but when the King discovered he was adverse to his schemes of Church confiscation, he found means to employ that prelate elsewhere. Gardyner was therefore sent on special diplomatic missions.

and corruption; yet there were men in Convocation who could not be purchased, and for whom the dungeon or the axe had no terrors. The schemes devised by the Archbishop for inducing priests to adopt or promote his political and religious views were of the most insidious and unjust description; and his plans for setting aside or hunting down honest opponents amongst the clergy exhibited a thorough disregard for equity and humanity. He ruined the archdiocese of Canterbury, for no virtuous clergyman could hold a cure under his administration.

The Supremacy question was the first great cause of rupture between the King and Convocation. "It was evident," writes Lingard, "that the adoption of the title of Head of the Church by the King would experience considerable opposition from the clergy; but the cunning of Crumwell had already organised a plan which promised to secure their submission. . . . The Convocation offered a present of one hundred thousand pounds in return for a 'full pardon.' To their grief and astonishment Henry refused the proposal, unless in the preamble to the grant a clause was introduced acknowledging the King to be the Protector and only Supreme Head of the Church and clergy of England. Three days were occupied in useless consultations; conferences were held with Crumwell and the Royal Commissioners; expedients were proposed and rejected; and a positive message was sent by Viscount Rochford that the King would admit of no other alteration than the addition of the words 'under God.' What induced him to relent, so far as to set himself down as only inferior to the Deity, is unknown; but an amendment was moved, with his permission (1531), by Archbishop Warham,

and carried with the consent of both Houses.* By this the grant was made in the usual manner; but in the enumeration of the motives on which it was founded was inserted, within a parenthesis, the following clause:—"Of which Church and clergy will acknowledge his Majesty to be the *Chief Protector, the only and Supreme Lord, and, as far as the law of Christ will allow, the Supreme Head.*"† The Northern Convocation adopted the same language, and voted for the same purpose a grant of eighteen thousand eight hundred and forty pounds. It is plain that the introduction of the words, 'as far as the law of Christ will allow,' served to invalidate the whole recognition; since those who might reject the King's supremacy could maintain that it was not allowed by the law of Christ. But Henry was yet wavering and irresolute; he sought to intimidate the Court of Rome, but had not determined to separate from its communion."‡

Stowe affirms that Lord Crumwell was "the deviser" of all the evil inflicted on the Church about this time. And Foss, a later Protestant historian, has no doubt that the enormous sum extorted from the Convocation on this occasion was planned by Crumwell.

In 1531, another declaration, it is alleged, "extorted, through fear," from Convocation, to the effect "that the King was the *Protector and Supreme Head of the Church and clergy of England.*" But, to "satisfy the conscience of a certain class of clerics," a clause was added, which invalidated the above, stating that his Highness was

* Wilkins, p. 725.

† Ibid., p. 742.

‡ See Lingard, vol. iv. pp. 55-89.

"Supreme Head in so far as it was *permitted by the law of Christ*."* Lord Crumwell and his Royal master, however, thought little of the amendments, or the declarations of Convocations, for every man who could not be purchased or silenced in some fashion, was soon disposed of by Crumwell. A majority of the Convocation in 1534 supported the Crown in its claims to the "Headship of the Church." In this year Convocation decreed that "the Act lately passed against appeals to Rome, together with the King's appeal from the Pope to a General Council, should be affixed to the doors of all the churches in the kingdom." And again they voted, with "due deliberation," that the "*Bishop of Rome had by the law of God no more jurisdiction in England than any other foreign bishop; and that the authority which he and his predecessors had exercised there was only by usurpation and the sufferance of English princes*."[†] This resolution, passed by the Lower House of Convocation, was opposed by only five members. The same question was submitted in the Upper House of Convocation, where the leaders of the Church were supposed to be influenced by the Court; but the question was carried almost unanimously. The bishops proceeded so far to please the Crown, that they took out new commissions, by which all their spiritual and episcopal authority was expressly affirmed to be *derived from the King*, and to be entirely dependent on "*his good will and pleasure*."[‡] In 1536 the Lower House of Convocation were as ductile to

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. iv. p. 174; *Antiquæ Britannicæ*.

† Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v.; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi.

‡ Records of Convocation.

the King's behests as they had been at any previous period. They declared that they *intended not to do or speak anything which might be unpleasant to the King's Highness, whom they acknowledged as their Supreme Head*, and whose commands they were resolved to obey—renouncing the Pope's "*usurped authority, with all his inventions, now extinguished and demolished; and addicting themselves to Almighty God and His laws, and unto the King, and the laws made within his kingdom.*"* This resolution did not receive the sanction of the Upper House of Convocation; and Henry, though flattered by the praises he received, was not pleased, because he knew well at the time that the homage offered to him was mere dissimulation; that "cowardice and dishonesty," to use the words of Lord Clinton, "were in the stomach of the members." Lingard describes the Convocation of this period to be, like the Peers and Commons, "the most obsequious servants of their Sovereign." This opinion is fully corroborated by other authorities. Mr. Froude acknowledges that the members of Convocation did not believe for a moment in the King's Supremacy, but acted from fear or venality. In fact, a reign of terror had been inaugurated, in which any act of honest independence, where the King was concerned, destroyed the man who displayed it with the certainty of fate.

The object of all contending parties in the State seemed to be to win the King's favour, that they might crush their own antagonists. Whether of the Papal or Anti-Papal party, few were actuated by a desire to promote Christian feeling. "It

* Collier, vol. ii. p. 119.

was a scramble for the loaves and fishes," observes Father Huddleston. Those who supported the King's Spiritual Supremacy were not sincere in their advocacy of his claims to that distinction; and when their opponents had the honesty and boldness to inquire in what part of the Scripture the government of the Church was permitted to be assumed by a layman, the King's clerical and temporal councillors appealed to those texts which prescribe obedience to the sovereign and government of a country. The "monarch," they maintained, "*was the image of the Almighty Creator upon this earth; to disobey his Highness's (Henry's) commands was to disobey God Himself*; to limit his authority, when no limit was laid down, was an offence against the King; and to make distinctions when the Holy Scripture made none, was an impiety against God." The advocates of these propositions admitted that the "additional powers now claimed might be unjustly used by a bad King; but to resist was a crime; and it became the duty of those who suffered to submit patiently and like good Christians to the will and pleasure of their sovereign lord the King."* These views were set forth in the pulpit on Sundays and holidays by the secular clergy. There are several of those extraordinary discourses still extant, which prove that the secular clergy were completely in the King's interest. In these unedifying and dishonest proceedings Dr. Bonner was the foremost man; whatever the King required, he performed. The monastic orders, however, pursued a very different course, and consequently incurred the hatred of the Monarch, whose vanity was raised to the highest pitch by the illegiti-

* See Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v.; Thorndale, Whyte, Heylin, Echard, Leland, Lingard, and Froude.

mate and dangerous powers conferred upon him by Parliament, and ratified by the prelacy and seculars. But the reader must not imagine that this accommodating Convocation was in any way favourable to the Lutheran doctrines : quite the contrary. It has been alleged that every ecclesiastic or layman who wished to remove abuses—such as pluralities, non-residence, a stricter discipline of the secular clergy, and “ well-defined understanding as to what were the spiritual and political claims urged by the Pontiff, as the Head of the Church ”—were secret upholders of the “ new learning.” These assertions are not sustained by any trustworthy authority. In fact, the clerics who were most opposed to the Papal authority in England regarded “ the German heresy ” with a feeling of horror. Dr. Collier’s research leads to the conclusion that the clergy did not make so absolute a submission as has been generally ascribed to them. Herbert, Wilkins, Foxe, Fuller, Burnet, Rapin, Leland, Echard, and Turner give different versions of what occurred ; but between misrepresentation, venality, “ terror, and silence,” on the part of a large number of the clergy, it is now difficult to judge of their real sentiments. A close sifting, however, of the Supremacy question will prove that they were, as a body, still the spiritual, if tacit subjects of the Pontiff, and not of the King of England. Everything has been misrepresented or coloured, in order to give a seemingly healthy and honest tone to the future proceedings of the Reformers. Plainly, the “ Corinthian columns” of the ecclesiastical edifice having toppled to their fall, the substructure became as uncemented sand, in which the best elements were helpless to avert the structure’s overthrow—for the time.

CHAPTER V.

THOMAS CRUMWELL.*

CARDINAL POLE has, in substance, said that the great art of the politician, in Crumwell's judgment, was to penetrate the various disguises with which kings are wont to conceal their wishes, and to devise the most specious expedients by which they may gratify their passions, without appearing to outrage morality or religion. Pole states that he "heard lessons to this effect from the lips of Thomas Crumwell in the palace of Cardinal Wolsey."†

Sir Thomas More thoroughly understood Crumwell, and did not augur well from his promotion to high positions under the Crown. In the early stages of his political service Crumwell sought the advice of More. When the good Chancellor resigned office he gave Crumwell a parting monition, from which it would appear that the far-seeing statesman apprehended that the new favourite of the King was likely to make "many suggestions as to how the revenue might be augmented." Some years antecedent, Crumwell proposed a monastic confiscation to Wolsey, who approved

* Thomas Crumwell was created, by King Henry, Earl of Essex, and also a Knight of the Garter. The middle classes never styled him Earl of Essex. They called him "Tom Crumwell;" and sometimes "Lord." I have elected to give him the title of Lord Crumwell in this work.

† Reginald Pole's Correspondence.

of the scheme, but declined encountering the consequences. At this time Crumwell professed to be a pious Catholic. In fact, he always made such demonstration of his piety as to lead many to believe that he was "a brazen hypocrite." The advice offered by Sir Thomas More to Crumwell was given in a very solemn tone. Laying his hand on the shoulder of the future "Vicar-General," he said, "Maister Crumwell, you are now entered into the service of a most noble, wise, and liberal Prince ; if you will follow my suggestions, you shall in your counsel-giving to his Highness, the King, ever tell him what he *ought* to do, but never what he is *able* to do. . . . For if a lion knew his own strength, how would it be for any man to rule him ?"* Subsequent events proved how far Crumwell acted on the advice of the Chancellor, for whom, it is said, he entertained a friendship. It is certain that he pleaded with the King for More's life, but was overruled by the Boleyns and Suffolk.

The first layman advanced to the office of Master of the Rolls was Thomas Crumwell, who could scarcely be recommended to it by his legal attainments, since his entire connection with the law was confined to his admission as a student at Gray's Inn.† The character and attainments of the English bar were by no means eminent at the time, yet this appointment exhibited a signally unappreciative notion of even the mediocrity of the profession. Crumwell held his position and several other lucrative offices from 1532 till 1536, when the Peerage and the Privy Seal were conferred upon this fortunate adventurer, who was brought up to no trade or profession, but that of "a

* Lingen's Roper ; Rymer ; Foss.

† Foss's English Judges, vol. vi.

wandering vagabond," as so frequently described by his contemporaries.

"Party spirit," writes Dean Hook, "may do great things; but perhaps its most wonderful feat is the conversion of Thomas Crumwell into a saint. Protestants are so unreasonably vehement in their condemnation of what Hugh Latimer called monkery, that they not only believe every tale that can be told against a monk, but the 'Diabolus Monachorum' himself they have canonized."*

Dean Hook makes an expressive passing remark upon the Protestant biographer of the Grand Inquisitor: "The life of Crumwell from the pen of Foxe is found, upon investigation, to be a mere romance." Mr. Froude never seems to accept this opinion of the "martyrologist," whose original falsehoods have been so marvellously distended. Dr. Brewer's research amongst Crumwell's papers and records completely refutes the statements of Maister Foxe.

Mr. Froude self-sustainedly differs much from those who had a personal knowledge of Lord Crumwell, whom he thus describes: "To him belonged the rare privilege of genius to see what other men could not see, and therefore he was *condemned to rule a generation which hated him, to do the will of God, and to perish in his success.* He had no party."† Dean Hook, who has had access to far more reliable material, and has treated that material with candour and honesty, gainsays Mr. Froude's eulogy of the Grand Inquisitor: "In his effort to create a public opinion against the monasteries Lord Crumwell resorted

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. p. 119.

† *Froude's History of England*, vol. iii. p. 444.

to measures which, if they are regarded with feelings of approbation by any, must be so only by the mere partisans of religion, and not by persons under the influence of a religion, the characteristic virtue of which is charity.”* Dean Hook is far from agreeing with Mr. Froude that Crumwell’s “aim was noble.”

“Crumwell’s rise,” says Lord Campbell, “more resembles that of a slave, at once constituted Grand Vizier in an Eastern despotism, than of a Minister of State promoted in a Constitutional Government, where law, usage, and public opinion check the capricious humours of the sovereign.†” Another writer says: “A true life of Thomas Crumwell might be made as interesting as a fairy tale.”

One of Crumwell’s biographers, of a recent date, states that he had “a noble and benevolent heart, with a patient temper. Nature endowed him with many virtues.” This portrait does not agree with the “entries” to be found in the handwriting of Crumwell as to his daily labours as a Minister of the Crown. Another writer says that he had “the art of diving into the hidden feelings of others, and of concealing his own.” Acting upon this maxim, the unscrupulous Minister saw his way to success in schemes however dark and daring.

In Cavendish’s “Life of Wolsey” he relates some anecdotes of Crumwell about the time of the Cardinal’s fall. “It chanced me,” writes Cavendish, “to come into the great chamber at Esher, where I found Maister Crumwell leaning on the great window with a prymer in his hand,

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. pp. 93, 94.

† *Lord Campbell’s English Chancellors*, vol. i. p. 600.

saying 'Our Lady Matins,' which had been his way a long time ago." This scene was evidently arranged by Crumwell to promote some scheme with the Cardinal. Dr. Maitland believes that Crumwell was an infidel some time previous to the overthrow of his "good master," Wolsey.

The ultra-Reformers "were delighted" with Crumwell's wholesale confiscations of the Monastic houses. Dean Hook is anxious to impress upon his readers that the Grand Inquisitor "was *not* a Protestant so far as doctrine was concerned. . . . He is generally supposed to have been a man of no religion—a kind of religious tradesman, who supported the party from which he could gain most; or a statesman to whom religion was a branch of policy. He had only one object in view—to enrich himself and his Royal master by the entire confiscation of the Monastic property. When that was accomplished, Crumwell quietly acquiesced in the Six Articles."*

Let the reader remember that the fearful statutes above-named were levelled against the Reformers by King Henry, and carried out by such Ministers as Crumwell and Cranmer. The Reformers, who were "under cover" at this period, had little sympathy with one another.

The chivalresque character of Crumwell has been asserted by Mr. Froude; yet chivalry as to women was somewhat misunderstood by his hero. We find that "supplications and presents" from the nuns failed in enlisting the sympathy of Lord Crumwell; they could make no impression; he was like the "deaf adder that refuseth to hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely."† There are still

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. pp. 89, 90.

† Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v. p. 6.

extant a number of most pathetic letters from nuns to Lord Crumwell, imploring him not to send them adrift upon the world without the means of living. Many of those poor ladies were sixty, seventy, and eighty years old; and several of them died from starvation and cold.

Let me here add that a friar named Deverent, who acted in connection with Richard Crumwell, the Grand Inquisitor's brother, in "spying about the convents," was, if possible, of a worse character than Dr. London. The history of those evil beings is to be found amongst the State Papers, by any student of history who thinks the result worthy of a labour almost incalculable in the present condition of tons of accumulated documents.

It is difficult to form an idea of the heartlessness, cruelty, and baseness of Crumwell. After the fashion of Domitian, he not only procured a death, but presided at the execution. He attended the stake, the scaffold, and the rack, to deride and insult his victims. He "went in state" to the burning of Dr. Forrest, chaplain to Queen Katharine, who was condemned for having denied the King's Supremacy, and advocated the cause of his injured Queen. "It was a fearful sight," writes a spectator.

The Franciscans were the especial objects of Crumwell's cruelty and greed. They were in reality wretchedly poor, but Crumwell maintained that they were secretly rich. Like his contemporary, Don Francisco Pizarro,* with the hapless Peruvians, he tried rack and fire to solve the question of

* In less than a year after the decollation of Crumwell, his Spanish counterpart in crime fell by the hands of an assassin, in his palace at Lima, 1541.

Franciscan wealth. He therefore racked and hanged those friars by dozens.*

The King and his Minister seem to have forgotten the vast services the monks had rendered to the State. The Benedictines were the most eminent agriculturists in Europe. The Cistercians were another body who rendered great service to the people. The Cistercians were the growers of wool—the staple in those days of the country's wealth. To the monks, for a long period, England was indebted for food and clothing, and indirectly for much of its prosperity in commerce and trade.

Mr. Froude describes Crumwell on some occasions as "*prosecutor, jury, and judge.*" But does it not seem an unnatural inhumanity which prompted him to be present at the immolation of his victims? The same author impresses on his readers that Thomas Crumwell's aim "*was noble.*" A less eccentric public than Mr. Froude's will fail hopelessly to see anything noble in any of his actions. In a manuscript memorandum in Crumwell's own handwriting, still extant, are to be seen an account of his "*daily labours in a noble cause:*"—Item—The Abbot of Reading to be tried† *and executed* at Reading, with his accomplices. Item—The Abbot of Glastonbury to be tried at Glaston, *and also to be executed there with his accomplices.* Item—To advertise the King of the execution of Maister Fisher (the Bishop). Item—To know his (the King's) pleasure touching Maister More. Item—To send

* See State Papers on the Monastic Executions; Pomeroy, Griffin, and Thorndale.

† The phrase "tried," used above, generally signified "impeachment," which was almost immediately followed by execution.—Crumwell's MS. Papers in the Record Office.

unto the King, by Ruffle, the behaviour of Maister Fisher. Item—To send Gurdon to the Tower *to be racked*.”*

In a letter of Crumwell's to the King, he relates that he “goes to-morrow to the Tower to see an Irish monk sit in the ‘*brack*,’ in order to make him confess.”† Crumwell most frequently attended the “racking of priests” who refused to take the Oath of Supremacy; “further obstinacy” was understood as a decree for “a quick execution.”

See how rapidly this demonstrator of “noble aims” makes execution follow trial. And still there is no lack of Protestant testimony as to the cruelties of Crumwell. “It is a remarkable circumstance,” writes Dean Hook, “that while the administration of the Supremacy Law was confided to Lord Crumwell, the persecutions were so numerous as to defy calculation.” And again, the Dean considers Crumwell's “religion” *purely political*. “When he desired to rouse the people against the monks, he patronised the most violent brawlers amongst the Reformers, and when his design was accomplished, then he sought the support of the opposite party to carry out the Six Articles *against* the Reformers.” A very old policy, not yet out of fashion—that of playing one party against another.

For eight years Crumwell ruled England as a despot, as well as a public and private spoiler, whose plunder in the aggregate was enormous.

To conciliate Crumwell was an inevitable policy with the apprehensive religious orders. The number of monks, nuns, and others who sent presents to “the Lord Crumwell”

* Crumwell's MS. Papers in the Record Office.

† Ellis's Royal Letters, Second Series.

to "stave off the evil day," or "to have mercy," has been set down by contemporary authorities with some exaggeration ; but recent researches prove the applications to have been vastly numerous. The Abbess of Godstowe, in order to "conciliate the Lord Crumwell," appointed him to the stewardship of the estate belonging to the Sisterhood, which he accepted, as well as all the "presents" the Sisters could collect. This Benedictine house was founded by King Alfred. Godstowe Nunnery was further endowed in the reign of Henry the First, by Editha, a young maiden of great beauty and piety. The Priory of Durham sent Crumwell presents of gold and silver ; the offerings of game, fowl, &c., were also very large. The Abbess of Shaftesbury sends him one hundred marks ; "a noble lord places in Lord Crumwell's hands a sum of £40 to obtain for him a *grant of a well-endowed monastery* ;" a lady of rank sends him £20, "to seek his good offices ;" several bishops send him sums of ten and twenty pounds by way of "New Year's gifts ;" the young Queen, Jane Seymour, sent him "vails," as did likewise Lord Hertford and his brother, Admiral Seymour. Sums of money were transmitted to him in costly gloves ; "gold pieces" were placed under his pillow, enclosed in papers, "with certain names and requests ;" even in the windows of his apartments sums of money were deposited, "with names and requests ;" and, as the reader is aware, Cranmer himself thought it necessary to win favour with Crumwell by allowing him £40 a year (about £250 of our present money) as "a memorial of his friendship."* "In Crumwell," says Mr. Froude, "the questionable practice of

* MS. Life of Thomas, Lord Crumwell ; also MS. Records of Presents to Lord Crumwell.

most great men of his time—the practice of receiving pensions and presents for general support and patronage—was carried to an extent which, even then, perhaps, appeared excessive.” But the case of Crumwell in this instance differs from other corrupt Ministers, from the fact that the great majority of people, in his case, “made presents” to save life and property. From what feeling did Archbishop Cranmer give him £40 per annum? No one will believe that it was from “friendship,” for Cranmer knew his treacherous friend too well. Mr. Froude admits that the spy system was carried to an enormous extent at home and abroad by Lord Crumwell. “He bought information anywhere, and at any cost; and secret service money for such purposes he must have provided, like his successor in the same policy, Francis Walsingham.”* “He bought his information anywhere, and at any cost.” This avowal, on the part of a friendly historian, will enable the most unreflecting to estimate the value of the “information supplied” by the Monastic Inquisitors. It has been stated by several authors, in whom the Protestant reader occasionally places confidence, that Lord Crumwell was influenced by “no mean or sordid feeling;” but this assertion can scarcely be applied to any of the public men of the time. “Courtiers,” writes Fuller, “keep what they catch, and catch what they can.” Thomas Crumwell “set down to his own name”—as his own share of abbey lands—*no less than thirty manors*—no mean proof that he was in nowise oblivious of personal interests, and that the information he bought was worthy of the man by whom it was purchased.†

* Froude, vol. iii. p. 444.

† Records of Monastic Confiscations.

Lord Crumwell's mode of living was most luxurious. His tastes profuse and wasteful. Yet his domestic arrangements, we are informed, manifested the profusion of the fortunate plebeian rather than the extravagance of the cultivated patrician. "On one occasion," we are informed, "he ordered his chief steward to stop the meat supplies of his vast establishments, to purchase no more mutton, but to stock the larders with venison and wild fowl. The hint was at once taken, and immense consignments of deer-flesh and other game reached the stores of the Lord Crumwell's establishment from all parts and persons, but chiefly from the religious houses. Crumwell indulged, we also perceive, in gambling, dicing, dancing, and theatrical displays, which latter he exhibited on a large and expensive scale, for the delectation of the Court. He seemed to possess all the requirements of the versatile favourite of a monarch not over-nice in his tastes—suggesting improvements in the dresses of Henry and the Queen Consort (for the time), whilst his own apparel was magnificent. He paid £2600 for a diamond and ruby (£13,000 of our present money); at his banquets he assumed the air and state of a Wolsey; but the imitation failed. "It was the rind without the kernel;" for Crumwell was comparatively unlettered, and showed a Vandal spirit in destroying the Monastic libraries, whilst the Cardinal of York was not only learned himself, but a munificent patron of learning.

Crumwell a Latin scholar! So Foxe assures us, and states that while in Italy the subsequent Grand Inquisitor of England learned Erasmus's Latin translation of the New Testament by heart. Of course, this statement of Foxe has been handed down from one historian to another, and gene-

rally adopted. Mr. Foss endorses the statement of John Foxe. Dean Hook states that it is "probable that during the course of Crumwell's busy and disreputable life, he could have afforded no time for such studies." In a "communicative moment" he once informed Archbishop Cranmer that in early life he had been a "ruffian."* Several authorities agree in the tradition, that "when in countries beyond the seas he joined a party of freebooters, and soon after came upon the treasure of a great lord, and then, like a cunning thief, suddenly disappeared from his companions." That he accumulated a large amount of gold and jewels by some unknown means is beyond doubt; and it is equally true that he deceived and despoiled more or less all those who employed or trusted him.

The question has been more than once asked, what could have been the religious sentiments of a man who had thus graduated from youth upwards, and who was the originator and patron of the shocking and blasphemous scenes which disgraced London during his administration? "The Lord Crumwell," writes Dean Maitland, "was the great patron of the ribaldry, and the protector of the ribalds, of the low jester, the filthy ballad-monger, the ale-house singers, and the hypocritical religious gatherings—in short, of all the blasphemous mocking and scoffing which disgraced the Protestant party at the time of the Reformation."† Some histories which are based more on facile assumption than on research, or which exalt the personal arrogance of the writer over fact, have lauded Crumwell for his magnanimous defence of his "good master," Cardinal Wolsey; but the

* That is, "A fellow who lived by the sword"—a mercenary, a free lance, or, as the class were then timorously named in Germany, "frehkriegsvolk."

† Maitland's *English Reformers*, p. 236.

truth is, that he defended the Cardinal as a "paid advocate." Circumstances compelled the Cardinal to accept his services, though he had no confidence in him. In the memorable scene wherein Wolsey took leave of his numerous and loving domestics, Crumwell cried and sobbed, and kissed his "good master's" hand, whilst the osculator may have had even then upon his person a portion of the jewels and gold which but *two hours before he had plundered from the same "good master."** Let it be observed that Crumwell immediately made terms with the King, to the detriment of his illustrious patron. The heart of the great statesman must have been broken, and his spirit in the dust, when he, who knew the utter worthlessness of the proximate favourite of the King, could condescend to address the creature whom he had made as "mine own entirely beloved Crumwell!" Human grandeur—at best a fleeting bubble—could hardly have demeaned itself in a more fruitless shape.

Cavendish records the parting between Wolsey and his household: "My Lord Cardinal commanded me to call all his gentlemen and yeomen up into the great chamber, commanding all the gentlemen to stand on the right, and the yeomen on the left: at last my lord came out, in his rochet upon a violet gown, like a bishop; he went with his chaplains to the upper end of the chamber, where was a great window. Beholding his goodly number of servants, he could not speak to them until the tears ran down his cheeks, which being perceived by his servants, caused fountains of tears to gush out of their sorrowful eyes in such a manner and way as would make any heart relent." Cavendish makes no mention of Thomas Crumwell being

* Carlo Logario.

present; but we are assured by Maister Wallop that he "came in the night and tarried till the next day; and was full of tears and sorrow for his good maister the Cardinal." This statement is corroborated by Carlo Logario, the Cardinal's Spanish physician.

The private papers of Crumwell himself have set at rest for ever his claims to the character of being grateful, or of even being commonly honest, or his hands free from not "petty larceny," but wholesale appropriation. Mr. Froude's favourite authority, the veracious Maister Foxe, bepraises Crumwell's "integrity, goodness, and piety," and closes up with designating him as "the Valiant Soldier of Christ." As the people of our day have justly learned to believe the reverse of what Foxe writes, the value of this blasphemous designation can at once be estimated. Cavendish fully sustains the general impeachment of Crumwell's character. In the history of the sacking of Rome in 1527, the reader will perceive the part taken in that fearful scene of massacre, plunder, and sacrilege, by an "Englishman of low birth," who is supposed to have been Thomas Crumwell, *then* in the service of Wolsey, and in Rome on his master's business.* Lord Herbert has no doubt that Crumwell was present at the "sack of Rome," and that he took part in it as a soldier in the army of Charles Duke of Bourbon. Mr. Foss, who writes generally in a friendly tone of Crumwell, has asserted that he was present at the sacking of Rome in May, 1527. It is also well authenticated that while in Italy Crumwell "aided and abetted" Sir John Russell, then employed by King Henry in fomenting the

* Robertson's *Charles the Fifth*, vol. ii. p. 286. In the first vol. pp. 203-208, of this work is to be found a detailed account of the sacking of Rome in 1527.

war, and narrowly escaped being made prisoner by the French. At another time Thomas Cromwell brought presents from Wolsey to the Pope; and, again, he assured Lord Percy that "he had influence with the Boleyn family to promote his marriage with Anna; yet he had no acquaintance with the Boleyn family at the time."

Stowe states that Cromwell was "hospitable and benevolent." "I have seen," he says, "when I was very young, above two hundred persons served every day with meat and drink at Lord Cromwell's gate." Here is Latimer's description of his social qualities:—"My very good lord is mighty fond of prime belly cheer himself, and unlike those that ate a goodly mess often themselves, would not give a mouthful to those that are hungry, my Lord Cromwell sayeth to his people,—'make merrie, there is plenty of belly cheer in my house.' Whatever the lack of good in the monks, they were wondrous thoughtful in supplying with a goodly feeling belly cheer to those who were hungry or cast-off by the world for their failings. It is but truth to say that my very good Lord Cromwell was as free a giver of belly cheer as any monk in the realm."

When Henry VIII. found that it was not judicious to "threaten" the Commons, or suddenly required money for his pleasure, he privately requested some members of the Council to invite on different days groups of members to dinner, and to press them with kind words to partake plentifully of the "belly cheer and wine, and send them home jolly." "The device succeeded admirably," says Roger Ascham. "The King sometimes attended himself," observes Cobham, "accompanied by Bishop Bonner, who was the best story-teller in London town. It was far in the night when

the King and his faithful Commons left the merrie hall of my Lord of Suffolk. The torch-lighters went first, the singing men next, then the King, the knights, and the esquires, who were all jolly, walked two and two." Thomas Wyatt, whose "delightful society was so much coveted," states that Lord Crumwell's dinner-parties were the most agreeable of all, and the King felt delighted in the jovial freedom of the scene. Crumwell was also an admirable story-teller. Crumwell, who had a marvellously tenacious memory, learned much from William Cavendish, Logario, and Roger Ascham, then a young man.

Now comes a change of scene. The ties of relationship, or of party, seemed to be fragile ligaments in the age of which I treat. The marriage link between Crumwell's son and Jane Seymour's sister availed the Grand Inquisitor but little, as the hour of his overthrow impended. When their aid was most needed the Seymours gave it not, but proved false to family faction associations.

"He (Crumwell) it was," writes Mr. Froude, "who, with open eyes, had led the King into his embarrassment. Yet was a second divorce to give mortal affront to the Lutherans, as the first had done to the Catholics? Was another marriage scandal to taint a movement which had already furnished too much of such material to insolence? What a triumph to the Pope! what a triumph to the Emperor Charles! How would his own elaborate policy crumble to ruins! It was a great matter indeed to Crumwell. But how would the whisper of the word sound in the ear of the English reactionaries? What would the clergy think of it, in whose, only not unanimous, convictions the German alliance had been from the first a pollution? What would the Parliament think of it, who had seen the fruit of their theological labours so cunningly snatched from them? What would the Anglican bishops think of it, who had found themselves insulted from the pulpit, from behind the shield of the hateful connection—with one of their body already in

the Tower, and the same danger hanging before them all? The Minister (Crumwell) who, in the conduct of the mighty cause he was guiding, had stooped to dabble in these muddy waters of intrigue, was reaping, within and without, the harvest of his errors. The consciousness of wrong brought with it the consciousness of weakness and moody alternations of temper. The triumph of his enemies stared him in the face, and rash words dropped from him, which were not allowed to fall upon the ground, declaring what he would do if the King were turned from the course of the Reformation. . . . Slowly, but surely, the pile of accusations had gathered in height and weight, till the time should come to make them public. Three years before, when the Northern insurgents (the Pilgrims of Grace) loudly demanded Crumwell's punishment, the King had answered that the laws were open, and were equal to high and low. Let an accuser come forward openly, and prove that the Privy Seal had broken the laws, and he should be punished as surely and as truly as the meanest criminal! The case against Crumwell was clear at least. . . . Not only was he treated on public grounds as the leader of a revolution, but, in his multiplied offices, he had usurped the functions of the ecclesiastical courts; he had mixed himself in the private concerns of families; he had interfered between wives and husbands, fathers and sons, brothers and sisters. . . . Justly, and unjustly, he had dragged down upon himself the animosity of peers, bishops, clergy, and gentlemen. The day of revenge was come!"

Marvellous admissions! Mr. Froude here candidly allows that Crumwell gave general offence to the old conservative families of the kingdom. In speaking of the period when Lord Crumwell was at the pinnacle of his power and greatness, the learned historian observes: "The proud English nobles had now for the first time to tolerate the society and submit to the dictation of a lay peer who had been once a tradesman's orphan and a *homeless vagabond*."*

* Froude's History of England, vol. iii. pp. 487, & 488.

In another chapter Mr. Froude states that his hero was "hated by the nobles and people as an incarnation of Satan." Yet he wishes to impress upon his reader that the Grand Inquisitor's "*aim was noble!*"

Crumwell was at the height of his power when the time of his fall arrived. The plans of his enemies were carefully arranged, and he was quite unconscious, it is averred, of the precipice on which he stood. He seemed to have had no notion of his danger until, having entered the Council Chamber and taken his seat, the Duke of Norfolk suddenly "arose and impeached him for high treason and heresy."*

Crumwell sat speechless—and was at once conveyed to the Tower. The proceedings against him were characterised by a cruel and eager haste, and the usual disregard of any forms of law. Yet there was a retributive similarity in his case to those of so many of his victims, which cannot fail to impress the reader. The Peers condemned the "most powerful Minister of the age"—a man who but a few days before they had declared worthy of "being elected Vicar-General of the universe."† But, notwithstanding this flattery, they hated Crumwell, because he was not "by birth

* The arrest of Crumwell took place on Friday, June 14 (1540), about three of the clock. When the Duke of Norfolk concluded his impeachment speech, Lord Chancellor Audley, who dined so frequently at the Lord Crumwell's hospitable table, advanced across the floor, and laying his hand on the shoulder of his friend, said,—“My Lord of Essex, I now arrest you for high treason against the King's Highness.” Roland Lee states that he was informed by one of the Council that it was a painful scene. “The man whom they all affected to respect so much yesterday they treated like a dog—or something worse—to-day. Lord Crumwell looked confounded; despair was written on his face immediately. Nearly thirty people knew of the intended impeachment, yet so closely was the secret kept, that Crumwell's spies could not catch even a whisper of it.”

† Stow's Chronicle; Hume, vol. iii. (folio edit.); Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. v.

of their own order." Indeed, the action of the Lords against him might have been anticipated from the inconsistency or treachery of a powerful friend of the parvenu Peer. Archbishop Cranmer, who had so recently written to the King in favour of Cromwell, now joined his enemies. Lingard observes, "Cranmer deemed it prudent to go along with the stream, and on the second and third reading he gave his vote in favour of the bill of attainder." It is alleged by Burnet that Dr. Cranmer was absent from the House of Peers on the occasion of the passing of the bill for attainting Lord Cromwell of high treason, but a reference to the journals of the House and another record supply the name of the "Most Reverend Thomas Cranmer, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Primate of all England" voting for the death of Thomas Cromwell, Earl of Essex. This statement is attested by Anthony Wood, Hallam, and other writers of high repute. The Commons made a show of opposition in passing the bill, but soon obeyed a ready and perilous menace from the Crown. Hume, who wishes to uphold the character of Cromwell, observes that the "only circumstance of his conduct by which he could have merited his fate was his being the instrument of the King's tyranny in conducting iniquitous bills of attainder in the former Session of Parliament against the aged Countess of Salisbury and other noble personages." Hume also contends that Cromwell was "worthy of a better master and of a better fate." *Cela va sans dire* in the first case; yet master and minister seemed well suited in character. When in the Tower, under sentence of death, the "proud Minister of yesterday" became the most craven and abject of beings, looking on every side for some means of pity or mercy.

In this prostrate condition he wrote many letters to the King, but in vain. When Henry brooded in silence over the fate of his victims, the moment of their doom could almost be named; yet he is said to have shed tears on reading the following passage in his fallen Minister's letter:—

"I, a most woeful prisoner, am ready to submit to death when it shall please God and your Highness, and still the frail flesh incites me to call to your Grace for mercy and pardon of mine offences. Written at the Tower, with a heavy heart and trembling hand of your Highness's most miserable prisoner and poor slave, Thomas Crumwell."

And again he writes,—

"Most gracious Prince, I cry for mercy, mercy, mercy!"

In another letter Crumwell compares the King's smiles and frowns to those of God; and beseeches him to suffer his wretched prisoner to kiss his balmy hand once more, that the fragrance thereof may fit him for heaven.*

Such a degraded condition of heart as that which inspired the blasphemous appeals only elicited the contempt of the relentless Monarch. Phillips, Wallop, and Harold, officials of the Tower, describe Crumwell as "crying out to the Virgin Mother to save him;" that "he was in an awful dread of death; that he caught a priest by the robe, tears rolling down his face, and besought his prayers;" "that he said the vengeance of Heaven overtook him at last;" that "he was cursed by the Church and cursed by the people." He maintained his innocence by the expression of awful oaths: "May God confound me; may His vengeance quickly fall upon me; may all the devils in hell torture me if I have offended against my blessed King in any way whatsoever as a traitor!"

* Burnet, vol i. p. 281; Hume, vol. iii. (folio) pp. 241, 242.

How sad to pen these facts of one who has been, even in recent times, represented as the chivalrous servant of a magnificent monarch!

Amongst the general accusations against Lord Crumwell were those of receiving bribes clandestinely, giving licences for the exportation of prohibited goods, making false returns of public moneys; also receiving payment for situations, and many other misdeeds. The Duke of Norfolk had long entertained a personal hostility to Crumwell, and having met him at a banquet at Archbishop Cranmer's, the Duke, it is alleged, used menacing language to Crumwell, upon which the latter declared he would soon have satisfaction against the Howards. Be this as it may, a combination was formed against Crumwell, which became irresistible, and his fall was reduced to merely a question of time. If Crumwell had borne himself more modestly with the remnant of old nobility left from the "Wars of the Roses," he might have escaped, at least the hostility of the House of Norfolk.

There are some curious incidents recorded as to who really brought about the Vicar-General's overthrow. Catherine Parr (the future Queen) seems to have been the chief person engaged in compassing his ruin. Lady Parr had an interview with the King on behalf of her relative, George Throckmorton, then a prisoner in the Tower; on this occasion she gave his Highness minute particulars of the peculations, sales of patronage, and tyranny practised by Crumwell.*

Some writers confirm those statements, and add that the youth, beauty, and address of Catherine Parr enabled her to make an impression on the Monarch as to the demerits

* Willis's *History of the Throckmorton Family*; and Pollino's *Chronicle*.

of Cromwell. Catherine Parr was at that time a Catholic of the Papal party. When Queen, three of Cromwell's monastic estates were conferred on her by the Crown. Cromwell was the third prominent statesman of Henry's Council within the brief period of ten years, whose fall is attributable to the influence of Court ladies.

Cromwell's panegyrist, Sharon Turner, states that he suffered from the same severity he "inflicted on others." In this opinion several writers concur. But there were facts connected with the severities which Cromwell inflicted that did not characterise those with which *he* was visited. Besides, his chief victims were eminent for their virtues. Upon the execution of Fisher and More, the French Monarch, through his Minister, communicated with Lord Cromwell and King Henry upon the "shocking affair of sending such virtuous men to the scaffold." The King of France "advises banishment, but not death." Cromwell replies "rather sharply;" "he rejects the humane advice of Francis;" and in writing to the English Ambassador at Paris, he says, "It was neither the office of a friend or of a brother to counsel the King to banish his traitors into strange parts, where they might have good occasion, time, place, and opportunity to do their feats of treason and conspiracies." In another letter to the English Ambassador, Cromwell enumerates "the treasonable practices" of Fisher and More. "They had such malice rooted in their hearts against their Prince, and for the total destruction of the common weal of the realm, were well worthy, *if they had had a thousand lives, to have suffered ten times a more terrible death.*"* Turner questions the genuineness

* French Despatches in State Papers. Burnet, Speed, Rapin, Hume, and Lingard, discuss this matter.

of the despatch, but other historians, including even Burnet, state it as beyond doubt. The secret correspondence and memoranda of Crumwell evince fully his sanguinary nature.

Shadwell, a contemporary of Crumwell, says: "No man was ever so deserted by friends as my Lord Crumwell; and the savage people doth rejoice like devils, because a good worthy man is about to die at the block." Hume states "that the people were averse to him, as the supposed author of the violences on the monasteries—establishments which were still revered and beloved by the commonalty." The Catholics regarded him as the ruthless enemy of their religion. The Reformers observing his exterior concurrence with all the persecutions exercised against them, were inclined to bear him as little favour, and reproached him with the timidity, if not the treachery, of his conduct. A recent biographer (Foss) states "that there can be no doubt that Crumwell was an early convert to the Reformed principles." This is merely repeating the words of John Foxe. Mr. Foss is silent as to Lord Crumwell's "will," and the remarkable codicil affixed thereto. Anon the reader will find that the "last testament" of Crumwell clears up the little controversy respecting the religious sentiments of the Grand Inquisitor—that is, the sentiments in which he underwent his death. In the "supreme moment," as our French brothers say, a man should be credited, if ever. There is no belief in which a man can die that binds the heart of truth in stronger links than the oldest Christian faith. Few men who ever knew it dare to die with a falsehood on their lips.

The King, who found that great clamours had on all hands arisen against the administration, was not displeased

to throw on Cromwell the load of public hatred ; and he hoped, by so easy a sacrifice, to regain the affections of his subjects. Cromwell held the office of Lord Privy Seal, Lord Chamberlain, and Master of the Wards. The old nobility, as I have said, were always opposed to the fallen Minister ; the bishops and clergy, over whom he exercised an almost absolute power, feared him. He was universally execrated by Englishmen of every shade of opinion ; and the day of his execution was one of public rejoicing in London. Desiring to give the evidence at all sides, it must be added that Hall states that Lord Cromwell had a particular aversion to the clergy, and the Papal connection ; and Churchmen in return had a fervent hatred for him, " for they obstructed the good man in all his plans of reformation."* The value of this statement will be seen a few pages onward.

The assertions of some of the older and more pronounced Puritan writers might be amusing, but for the sad fact of succeeding historians adopting them for authorities—in thus doing, suiting or forming the prejudices of their readers. Rapin, Carte, Echard, Speed, and Oldmixon consider, in general terms, that " Cromwell was the victim of a Popish conspiracy." " The majority of the people," writes Oldmixon, " loved the good Lord Cromwell, *because he was a true Protestant ; half the nation were God-fearing Protestants, and those that were Papists approved of the suppression of the monkish rookeries.*" And again, Oldmixon is convinced that Cromwell was " murdered at the instigation of monks and nuns." John Foxe " laments the loss of

* Hall's Chronicle; Hume's History of England, vol. iii. (folio); Collier, vol. v.

this God-fearing man, whose death *caused great spiritual destitution, the Bible having been withdrawn from the people.*" Speed and Foxe occasionally find fault with Crumwell for "allowing himself to be led by the nuns;" for instance, it is contended, that a statute passed in 1539, to "punish immoral clerics, was at the suggestion of several abbesses and prioresses;" but at the period named the convents were nearly destroyed. In fact the absurdity of the statement is its own refutation. It is more probable that the statute originated with the King in one of his brief "penitential moods." The Act in question decreed for violation of celibacy, marriage, or "any immoral conduct" by a priest, the first offence forfeiture of goods or imprisonment during the King's pleasure; and, to be charged with the same offence a second time, the offender was to be hanged, drawn, and quartered. The latter sentence is very like what Henry would suggest himself. The Bishop of Winchester, however, moved the omission of the "hanging clause." This penal statute was supported in the House of Lords by Archbishop Cranmer, and Dr. Shaxton, Bishop of Salisbury, both of whom were married at the time; yet no one could well prove the case; or perhaps feared the resentment of such a powerful prelate as Cranmer.

Nicholas Shaxton subsequently recanted the principles he adopted, from the "goodly reasoning" of his most revered friend Dr. Cranmer. He "made and subscribed" a very solemn public declaration of his firm belief in all the tenets of the Catholic Church.* The records of the proceedings have been carefully preserved.

* For particulars, see Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v. pp. 159, 160.

Some recently-discovered documents show that Lord Crumwell was always in favour of the celibacy of the clergy, and had angry discussions with Cranmer upon the subject. Did Crumwell know of the Archbishop's marriage? A very doubtful question; or what "consideration" did the sordid Minister give for the £40 a year regularly paid by Dr. Cranmer to him?

After recurring to the immense services rendered by Lord Crumwell to the State, Mr. Froude describes him as the "most despotic minister England had ever seen;" that "all parties hated him, *even those whom he loved*;" that "the Popish party were loud in their acclamations and joy at his fall;" that the remnant of the old English nobles "exulted at his misfortune;" the House of Norfolk were enthusiastic, and Lord Surrey exclaimed: "Now is that foul churl dead, so ambitious of the blood of others; now is he stricken down with his own staff;" that "Francis the First congratulated Henry;" that the Emperor Charles the Fifth exclaimed jubilantly, "So he hath reached the Tower as a prisoner;" that the Pope and the Cardinals rejoiced; "that the common people whom he had sustained had forgotten him," and "he passed away without the sympathies of the population."*

Even if Mr. Froude had not stated these facts respecting Crumwell, there is self-contradiction enough in the following description to detract from the worship he would fain secure for the great Monastic Inquisitor:—"Lord Crumwell pursued an object, the excellence of which, as *his mind saw it*, transcended all other considerations—the freedom of

* Froude's History of England, vol. iii. p. 525.

England and the destruction of idolatry; those who from any motive, noble or base, pious or impious, crossed his path, *he crushed, and passed on over their bodies. . . . His aim was noble!* For his actions he paid with his life; and he followed his victims by the same road which they had trodden before him, to that high tribunal, where, it may be, that great natures who on earth have lived in mortal enmity may learn at last to understand each other.”*

Notwithstanding this inconsistent eulogy, posterity can discover in Thomas Cromwell nothing but a bold, bad, ambitious man. He has been pronounced sincere, yet he pretended to be of one religion, whilst he died in the communion of another, and left the last will and testament of a Catholic. *Honest*—why, he not only bore false witness but embezzled the fruits of his perjury, and finally perished, professing his return to a creed whose doctrines he had disavowed, and so many of whose ministers he had beggared or slain. Divested of word-painting, this is the true picture of the “most despotic Minister England had ever seen.”

It has been stated that Cromwell expressed “much contrition on the scaffold for the part he had taken in the confiscation of Church property, and in slaying many good and noble citizens.” But a recent writer is at issue with many as regards this statement, and contends that the speech attributed to Cromwell at Tower Hill was a forgery, and that put forward by Maister Foxe is the “genuine prayer.”† It is rather strange that Burnet should not have given the

* Froude's History of England, vol. iii. p. 526.

† That most truthful author, Mr. Frazer Tytler, has, with great clearness, traced the misrepresentations of John Foxe when tested with authentic State Paper Records.

document published as Crumwell's dying speech by Foxe as genuine, and which, by the way, when examined, looks more like the studied performance of Poynt or John Bale, than the words of a man who appeared on the scaffold in "confusion and tears," betraying the most abject terror of his doom. Did Burnet justly doubt the authenticity of Foxe's "speech?" or what motive induced him to give in his "Reformation" a "Catholic declaration," with an endeavour to translate it in a Puritan sense?

The following is the scaffold speech attributed to Thomas Crumwell by Burnet:—

"He (Crumwell) acknowledged his sins against God, and his offences against the King who had raised him from a base degree. He declared that he *died* in the *Catholic faith*. He desired them to pray for the King, for the Prince, and for himself; and then prayed fervently for the remission of his past sins, and admission into eternal glory.

That this version of Crumwell's dying words is the true one, and not that of Foxe, derives much proof from the fact of Burnet taking the trouble of endeavouring to explain it according to his own wishes, which he essays in this fashion:—

"By what Lord Crumwell spoke at his death, he left it much to be doubted of what religion he died, *but it is certain he was a Lutheran*. The term, *Catholic faith*, used by him, seemed to make it doubtful, but that it was then used in England in its true sense in opposition to the *novelties* of the See of Rome."*

Neither John Foxe nor any of his eccentric modern admirers could make a statement more discordant with fact

* Burnet's *Reformation*, vol. i. part i. pp. 516, 517 (Oxford edit.), 1816.

than the above. Again I refer the reader to the scene where Crumwell and Cranmer were prominent in upholding the Royal theologian in a discussion upon the "Real Presence" with Lambert. This memorable incident took place in 1538. About the same time Crumwell wrote to Sir Thomas Wyatt, the English Ambassador in Germany, detailing an account of the "glorious conference," to which I have already alluded. Both Crumwell and Cranmer made a most marked display in favour of Transubstantiation and other Catholic doctrines, on the occasion in question. If they did not believe in those principles at that period, then they must have practised hypocrisy and perjury to an amazing extent. At the time of Crumwell's death (1540) there was no established Protestant liturgy of England. If the "novelties of the See of Rome" were set aside by the Reformers—if the Reformation, as alleged, was merely a recurrence to the olden purity of belief, where have we the ancient and reverend liturgy? We hear not a word of *that*; it was not until 1547 that Dr. Cranmer and his colleagues set about the arrangement of a *new* liturgy out of existing Popish materials. In Thomas Crumwell's time the Reformers were merely in rebellion against Rome—an insurgency strong and expansive as the temporal possessions of Catholicity in the island. Everything was in confusion and disorder. In devising a fashion of faith, the Reformers had to make choice between the shifting doctrines of Luther, who permitted polygamy to his patron, the abstract principles of Zwingli, the savage dogmatisms of John Knox, or the horrors of the Anabaptist socialist teaching, which England, however, was too honest and moral to sanction. The quarrels about respective elements of belief

were bitter amongst the early Reformers, whilst the King, the greater portion of the independent nobility, and the mass of the people remained adherents of the doctrines of the Catholic Church. Henry only desired to plunder the Church, not to gainsay her doctrines, which he never did. What did Crumwell mean by saying, "*Not doubting of any article of faith, or of any sacrament of the Church?*" Of what Church? Protestantism was not proclaimed for seven years *after* his death. Again, he says "he had been *seduced*." Seduced from what? And to what did he return? As before said, he had not Protestantism to return to, and he must fain recur to the Church of his great patrons, Pace and Wolsey. There was no other Church in the realm. "Novelties of the See of Rome!" If they were "*Novelties*," why did not the Reformers recur to the more ancient *cultus*, if such there were? Instead of this they merely lopped some branches from the old Roman trunk, and set them up to become so many independent offshoots of belief as we find at present in England. Mr. Froude is very outspoken and candid as to "lopping branches from the Roman trunk," and leaves his readers in a puzzle as to what "branch" he himself is *now* attached.

But the most remarkable version of Lord Crumwell's dying speech is that recorded by John Stowe:—

"I am come hither to die, and not to purge myself, as some think, peradventure, that I will. For if I should do so, I were a very wretch and miser. I am by the law condemned to die, and thank my Lord God that hath appointed me this death for mine offences. For since the time that I have had years of discretion I have lived a sinner, and offended my Lord God, for the which I ask Him heartily forgiveness. And it is not unknown to many of you that I have been a great traveller in this world, and, being but of base

degree, I was called to high estate, and since the time I came thereunto, I have offended my Prince, for the which I ask him heartily forgiveness; and I beseech you all to pray to God with me, that He will forgive me. And now I pray you that be here, to bear me record, *I die in the Catholic faith, not doubting in any article of my faith; no, nor doubting in any Sacrament of the Church. Many have slandered me, and reported that I have been a hearer of such as have maintained evil opinions, which is untrue.* But, I confess, that like as God, by His Holy Spirit, doth instruct us in the truth—so the devil is ready to seduce us—and *I have been seduced.* But, good people, bear witness now, that *I die in the Catholic faith of the Holy Church.* And I heartily desire you to pray for the King's grace, that he may long live with you in health and prosperity, and that after him, his son, Prince Edward, that goodly impe (child) may long reign over you. And, once again, I desire you to pray for me, that, *so long as life remaineth in this flesh, I waver nothing in my faith.*"*

Edward Hall, Crumwell's contemporary, accepts the above as the "genuine declaration at the scaffold." Cardinal Pole held a similar opinion. Mr. Froude, however, contends that the Cardinal doubted its accuracy.

It has been stated, in connection with Stowe's narrative of Lord Crumwell's "last moments," that he (Stowe) was "a zealous Papist and a weak-minded man." Strange, in reply to a statement so explicit, the truth should be that "little John Stowe" was a very decided supporter of the

* John Stowe's Chronicle; Dodd's Church History, vol. i. p. 312. For curious incidents connected with Crumwell's "last hours, and his speech," see Hall, Heylin, Thorndale's Letters to Polydore Vergil, Pomeroy, Joscelyn, Carte, and Echard. I beg to call the reader's attention to the fact that there were three priests attached to the Tower chapel. "To one of these priests," writes Thorndale, "my Lord of Essex (Crumwell) made divers confessions for the health of his soul." The night before the execution, Crumwell sat many hours discoursing upon religion with the priests. At the Mass in the morning he most reverently received "the Bodye of our Adorable Maker and Saviour. The Lord Crumwell was on his bare knees on the stone floor for sixty minutes, and sheddeth a torrent of tears."

Reformers; and in Edward's reign "subscribed to the new tenets." He was, however, respected by all parties, and considered an "honest man," at a period when that title sounded rather doubtful in certain circles of high-placed Englishmen, literate or illiterate. In the early part of Elizabeth's, reign Stowe's patrons were Archbishop Parker, Bale, Horn, Cecil, Bacon, and Dudley; and later still, such ultra-Protestants as Whitgift and Hutton. Nearly all of those patrons may fairly be considered to have an interest in imparting a Protestant colouring to Crumwell's scaffold picture.

From the days of John Foxe and Speed down to the present, many notable writers who have professed ultra-Protestantism have manifested a desire to place Thomas Crumwell on the roll of "Protestant saints and martyrs." Was it because he was a man of the world only, and not a professor of "religion?" It is time that a too long-standing delusion should disappear from the pages of books supposed to instruct, not to mislead posterity. Crumwell's supposed Protestantism consisted in his combination with sordid irreligious Catholics, who desired to better their social condition by plundering the religious houses, and putting to the rack or the scaffold their inmates. Such was the extent of Lord Crumwell's Protestantism; and such, probably, would have proved the utmost stretch of *the* Protestantism of all his wicked *confrères* had they been put to the same fatal ordeal—with concurrent repentances and vindication of their belief in the creed of their fathers.

Dean Hook admits that Crumwell's supporters were, as a body, violent men, who aimed not at the *reform*, but the overthrow of the Church; and who desired to see in its place a Protestant sect, though what Protestantism was

scarcely two persons were prepared to say.* The incidents above alluded to occurred some years subsequent to the period described by Mr. Froude, when Wolsey "persecuted the Protestants." Lord Campbell also assures his readers that "More's jurors *were all* staunch Protestants." With such public instructors, it is no marvel that the English people should be so sadly misinformed as to many great events linked with the history of their country. Time, however, continues to unveil the facts as to the history of the past.

Again, let us see Thomas Crumwell's famous "will," which is just as anti-Protestant as the "genuine prayer" of Maister Foxe is anti-Popish. Here is a specimen which is quoted by Mr. Froude and Dean Hook:—

First, I bequeath my sowl to the great God of Heaven, my Maker, Creator, and Redeemer, *beseeching the most glorious Virgin and Blessed Lady Saint Mary, the Virgin and Mother, with all the holy company of Heaven, to be mediators and intercessors for me to the Holy Trinity*, so that I may be able, when it shall please Almighty God to call me out of this miserable world and transitory life, to inherit the Kingdom of Heaven. . . . [After bequeathing moneys, chattels, &c., to various relatives and friends, he speaks of charity—"works for the health of his sowl."] "I will," he says, "mine executors shall sell said farm (Carberry), and the money thereof to be employed in deeds of charity, to prayer for my sowl, and all Christian sows. Item—I will mine executors shall conduct and hire a priest, being an honest person of continent and good living, to sing (pray) for my sowl for the space of seven years next after my death, and to give him for the same £10 13s. 4d. for his stipend. Item—I give and bequeath to every one of the five orders of Friars within the Citie of London to pray for my sowl, twenty shillings. Item—I give and bequeath to sixty poor maidens in marriage, £40—that is to say, 13s. 4d. to every one of the said poor maidens."

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 191.

He further bequeaths £20 to be distributed amongst "poor householders to *pray for his soul*." There are several other items set down in the "old Popish fashion," for "prayers and benevolence," *after the testator's death*. This will was drawn by Crumwell on the 12th July, 1529, and he commenced his career as Henry's "Vicar-General" in 1534: he ascended the scaffold in 1540, and it may be, and has been argued that, with his alleged change of religious principles, Crumwell "altered his will." But he never did so, and the fact is a satisfactorily strong proof against his "Protestantism."

Dean Hook states that some "five or six years after the execution of the "will," Crumwell had occasion to correct it, when the bequest for prayers to be made for his soul were *retained*; and it is proved that this was not an oversight, for, as he regarded the priest who was to pray for the dead, he desired him "*to continue his services for seven years, and he increased his stipend from twenty pounds to forty pounds twelve shillings and sixpence*."* Dean Hook further remarks: "The partisans of Crumwell have considered as not authentic the report which was circulated of his last dying speech and confession, *but the 'will' must make their labour vain*."† Writers who eschew State documents or contemporary evidence, in either English or Irish history, may ignore written facts; but personal assertion will not now be accepted by investigators of truth, however successful has hitherto been their dogmatic indifference to the *litera scripta* so inequitably and suspiciously suppressed. It is somewhat unintelligible, therefore, how a "will" so near the truth has been inserted in the

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi. p. 125.

† Ibid. p. 125.

volumes of Mr. Froude, who, however, supplies a supposition at the end, to explain an unwonted exhibition of candour.

"I readily grant," writes Dr. Collier, "Lord Crumwell *was no Papist* at his death, and it is pretty clear that he *was no Protestant*. It is evident, however, that he died in the communion of the *then* Church of England—that is, in the religion *professed* by King Henry VIII."* This is a distinction without a difference, for Henry changed no dogma of the Church.

About the time of Crumwell's fall, the scaffold and the stake daily presented scenes both anomalous and revolting. Barnes, Gerard, and Jerome, consigned to the stake as Reformers, were carried to the place of execution on hurdles, whilst along with them was placed on each hurdle a Catholic, who was hanged and quartered for denying the King's spiritual supremacy. Abel, Fetherston, and Powell, who were of the Catholic faith, declared that the most grievous part of the punishment was that of being "drawn on the same hurdle with such men as Barnes and his companions!"† A Portuguese nobleman, then in London, remarked that those who were against the Pope were burnt, and those in his favour were consigned to the headsman. Richard Fetherstone, above-named, was one of Queen Catherine's chaplains, and the manager of her defence during the divorce litigation. "His conduct at the scaffold," says Tyrwell, "commended the sympathy of the Reformers committed to the fire near to the spot at which he suffered. He forgave his persecutors; he ascended the scaffold

* Collier's *Ecclesiastical History* (first edit.), vol. ii. p. 181.

† Herbert, Collier, Sander, Hume (folio edit.), vol. iii.

with Spartan-like courage, and died grandly." John Bale represents him as "a man of considerable learning, and the author of some interesting ballads, which seemed destined for the fire," as they likewise were destroyed.

The tradition of the times affirms that, although ungainly in person, Crumwell's manners were prepossessing, and that he could add to the value of a favour by the grace with which he conferred it.* Yet at the same moment he was utterly devoid of all sympathy. He could, without the slightest emotion, look upon a fellow-creature's agonies at the stake. He could stand upon the scaffold whilst the blood of some former friend streamed at his feet. And next, perhaps, go to inform the King "how the traitors died." Crumwell was the special representative of the King at the execution of Anne Boleyn and of Dr Forrest. The "roasting alive in chains," of Forrest is the most horrible case recorded of Henry's reign.

But to the sequel. For six weeks lay in a dungeon in the Tower the man who had left many a woman a widow, and many a child an orphan, awaiting his own unpitied doom. The hour of retribution had arrived. A vast multitude of people congregated to behold the Grand Inquisitor in the hands of the public executioner. No one anticipated the horrors of the scene. Two unskilful headsmen are described as "chopping Lord Crumwell's neck and head for nearly half-an-hour;" the blood flowing profusely along the scaffold, whilst the ruffian mob danced and shouted in the frantic excitement of mingled joy and horror. An awful spectacle! Thomas Crumwell, who had attended

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi. p. 123.

so many executions at the scaffold and at the stake, to witness the torture and insult heaped upon his victims, was thus terribly dismissed from life. A long roll of terrible deeds surrounds Crumwell's memory at all points, yet we are assured many times, by a recent biographer, that his "*aim was noble.*"

When a special biography of Thomas Crumwell is undertaken by some honest and conscientious author, a fresh flood of light will be poured upon the transactions connected with the monastic visitations—the manner of men selected, the instructions they received, and the reports produced. Whoever that writer may be, he will find in the British Museum and the Record Office a large number of memoranda, notes, and letters in Crumwell's own handwriting, together with the secret correspondence between the Grand Inquisitor and his agents, which will fully establish the monstrous injustice perpetrated by this unprincipled Minister. Mr. Tytler, who examined some of the documents in question many years ago, remarked that they exhibit Crumwell as "equally tyrannical and unjust, despising the authority of the law, and *unscrupulous in the use of torture.*" How much worse would have been the opinion of this honest and fearless historian had he perused all the proofs *now* at hand on this question?*

* The Act of Attainder against Crumwell is not printed in the Statute-Book. It is to be seen on the Parliament Roll of Henry's reign; and also in Burnet's *Collectanea*.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SOCIAL PICTURE CHANGED.

DEAN HOOK has the courage to state that Henry VIII. *was not a bloodthirsty tyrant, and never contemplated with delight the misery of others.*"* Let the reader peruse the following well-authenticated narrative, and then digest his wonder at the strange picture drawn by the Dean of Henry Tudor, all the traits of which are actually effaced by the pen of Dean Hook himself in his own work. Even Mr. Froude admits the pitiable condition of the people of England under the new order of things. The monks were the great cultivators of the soil of England—their lands the main element of food production. The cultivation of the land, which theretofore had employed and maintained, not in superfluity, but with all necessities, the great bulk of the people, was suddenly suspended. Thousands, most likely millions, of acres which had been under the plough for successive centuries were all at once converted to pastures to meet the new and increasing demand for English wool. The extravagant habits of the landowning classes rendered them but too glad to welcome any change which would tend to relieve them from their pecuniary difficulties, and give them the means to procure fresh pleasures and to indulge in new fancies. So the

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii, p. 52.

ploughs were banished from the farms, and with them the ploughmen and their families, and all who had passed their years in tilling the soil. What had been populous and thriving hamlets and villages, and busy towns, were, in a short time, converted into wastes.* *The cottages were pulled down, and the churches turned into shelters for the sheep, which now roamed in vast flocks over what had been the once busy haunts of men.* "Landlords were accused of practising more than Eastern tyranny, which compelled honest householders to become followers of less honest men's tables;" which brought honest matrons to the "needy rock and cards;" which compelled "men—children of good hope in the liberal sciences, and other honest qualities whereof the land had great lack," to labour at menial occupations that they might "sustain their parents' decrepit age and miserable poverty." Froward children, we are further assured, shook off the yoke of godly authority, and ran headlong into all kinds of wickedness, finally "garnishing gallows trees;" modest and chaste virgins, lacking a dowry, were compelled to pass their days in servitude, or else "to marry to perpetual miserable poverty." Universal destruction seemed, it is added, to have befallen "this noble realm, by the outrageous and insatiable desire of the surveyor of lands."†

The King was so constantly employed in hanging, drawing, and quartering, often "for conscience-sake," occasionally varying the order by substituting *parboiling and*

* Sir Henry Spelman and his son have drawn sad pictures of the condition of the people of Norfolk and Suffolk under the new landowners.

† An Informacion and Petition agaynst the Oppressions of the Pore Commons of this Realme, 1543.

*boiling as a change,** we need not wonder that thieves received little thought and less pity from those who were the arbiters of life and death. It must have been, to men less hardened than they who played so prominent a part in those scenes, a horrible and ghastly sight to behold, wherever they turned their eyes, the awful evidences of the brutal cruelty of the law. Along the river were suspended the bodies of men and women who had been accused of foul play to foreigners. Tower Hill must have been one ooze of mud, mingled and streaked with the blood of the victims who there yielded up their lives to the fury of a King whose thirst for gore could never be slaked. Tyburn, with its never-ending streams of victims, who escaped the axe at Tower Hill, or the fires of Smithfield, only to wind their slow and painful way from the various dungeons of London, there to be hanged, and the hanging to be followed by the revolting dismembering, that their yet quivering limbs, and heads with the features scarcely set in death, might garnish a city gate till they putrified and dropped, mingling with the mud and filth of the highway.† Persons ran through the streets of London crying out for food. They were seized and hanged from the "nearest tree."‡

And how fared the social state at this juncture? Dicing¹

* See Chronicle of the Gray Friars, p. 35; also the Statute condemning poisoners to be boiled in oil, which statutes were carried out in ten cases.

† The Lamentacyon of a Christen agaynst ye Cytye of London, &c. 1542.

‡ In the reign of Elizabeth, extraordinary powers were issued to the Lord Mayor, to hang from the nearest tree those clamorous rogues who demanded bread. The name of the official who carried out this order was that of "Provost Marshal." The record of the proceedings of his tribunal is still extant.

and carding ruined many an heir, and brought wealthy men to beggary. In Latimer's time, he tells us, there were more dicing-houses than had ever been, where young men "played, and lost all they possessed." The King passed an Act for the abolition of gaming-houses, and it was even threatened to punish carders and dicers in the same mode as robbers and adulterers. But all in vain. Every vice was practised with augmented zest when the exemplary restraints of a genuine morality or a pure religion were removed, or by the silence, suppression, or absence of its ordained servitors. But the law's visitation of socially baneful sin was by no means impartial. If a poor man supplemented a wife, or if his wife "played false," they were punished as they deserved. We are informed, however, that an alderman, or a gentleman, or a wealthy man, might indulge in an immoral life, and "justice stayed her hand," and permitted them to go unpunished. "London (we are assured by Protestant writers) deserved a thousand times more plagues than ever fell upon Tyre and Sidon, or even on Sodom and Gomorrah."* This state of things befell in a few brief years after the confiscation of the religious houses, and the death or dispersion of their inmates.

Winslow states that the alms which the monks dealt, and the hospitality which they maintained, "every man knoweth." "Many thousands were well relieved of them, and might have been better, if they had not had so many great men's horses to feed, and had not been overcharged with such idle gentlemen, as were never out of abbeys; but now that the abbeys, with all their lands, goods, and impro-

* *Chronicle of the Gray Friars*; *Latimer's Sermons*.

priated parsonages be in temporal men's hands, I do not hear tell that one halfpenny worth of alms or any other profit cometh unto the people of those parishes where such parsonages and vicarages be ; and where twenty pounds was given yearly to the poor in more than a hundred places in England, is not one meal's meat given now. This is a fair amendment."*

The industrious poor who had "furrowed the soil and made it fertile for the multitude" were driven from their homes—"turned out of their shrouds like mice"—men and women, husbands and wives, fatherless children, woful mothers with their babes, small in substance, but many in number—whither should they go, ousted, as in the long subsequent melancholy stampedes in the sister isle for so many generations ? *"Without a resting-place, compelled to sell their small stock of goods for what they would bring, they wandered from town to town, from shire to shire, with no remedy but to steal and be hanged, or to beg and get cast into prison, to be 'pinched,' racked, and whipped as vagabonds whom no man would set to work."*† Such outcasts must have doubled the number of idle and sick poor, who had lost the charity on which they depended when the monasteries were suppressed. To endeavour to hide their poverty from the "grieving eyes of the country"—perhaps, hoping to find some redress for the cruel hardships which they had to bear—these sad bands of the evicted turned their faces towards London, which was even then "one of the flowers of the world touching worldly riches." "There were poor people

* The Complaynt of Roderyck Mars., l. f. 29

† Gilpin's Sermons, p. 33. Let the reader remember that Bernard Gilpin was an active Reformer in Edward's reign.

innumerable, who were forced to go from door to door, or to sit openly begging in the streets, while many, unable to move out of the houses, lay down and died, because the rich did not aid them. Those who obtained office in the city spent their riches upon noblemen, aldermen, and rich commoners, heedless of the suffering and starvation around them, or heeding them only so far as to send a few scraps and bones to Newgate.”* “Every day the people famished in consequence of the misappropriation of the funds of religious houses.”† When Crowley thought of these innumerable able-bodied poor, and the alleys in which they huddled at night, “it made his heart weep.”‡ And well it might, to see those poor, feeble, blind, halt, lame, sickly old fathers, poor widows, and young children, mingling with the idle and dissembling vagabonds, and creeping about the miry streets of London and Westminster, picking up a precarious living by day, and perchance enough to pay their lodgings in those horrible alleys which merchants owned, and from which they derived considerable rents.§ The mendicancy caused by the confiscation of the monastic houses was met by an amended code of “whipping,” “ear-cutting,” “pinching,” and an “improved specimen” of the pillory invented by Richard Crumwell. A licence for begging was granted by a Statute, drawn up, it is said, by the King himself; but there is reason to believe that it was the work of Audley and Suffolk. By this Act all magistrates and mayors were enjoined to make diligent search and inquiry of all aged poor and impotent persons,

* *The Lamentacyon*, &c., l. f. 9.† *Crowley's Epigrams*, l. f. 5.‡ *Ibid.*, 7.§ *Ibid.*, 7.

"who live, or of necessity be compelled to live, by alms of the charity of the people." . . . "All such persons are to be licenced to beg within certain appointed districts, and if found begging in any other place than that to which they are licenced, they are to be punished by imprisonment in the stocks *for two days and two nights*, receiving only bread and water (a small quantity) for their sustenance during that time"—clement treatment from the despoilers of the poor for men and women averaging from sixty-five to seventy years of age, many of whom were lame or blind monks and nuns. Those who were found begging "without a due licence to do the same" were punished with far greater severity. *"He shall be stripped naked from the middle upwards, and be whipped within the town in which he be found, or within some other town, as it shall seem good; or if it be not convenient so to punish him, if a culprit be too old or infirm, he shall be set in the stocks for the space of three days and three nights."* Let the reader bear in mind that even if those unhappy people were able to labour, there was no labour to be had, for a general stagnation in commerce as well as in agriculture followed the monastic confiscations. The "beggars who were well able to work" met a worse fate. "They were to be sent to the nearest market town, or other town or village, and there *to be tied to the end of a cart, naked, and to be beaten with strong whips throughout the same town till their bodies become bloody by reason of the same mentioned whipping.*"* After this barbarous punishment,

* Statutes of Henry the Eighth's reign. The law was carried out in every instance, and with, if possible, more inhuman cruelty than the Statute designed. The records of the times give a fearful picture of the manner in which the officials carried out those terrible statutes.

the victim was sent to the place where he had been "commanded to reside"—and where, possibly, there was no employment—"and if," said the Statute, "he do not there work for his bread, *he shall be again and again whipped, till he getteth his living truly by the sweat of his brow.*" Another class of beggars were to be "slightly scourged on two days, and on the third day to be placed upon a pillory from nine of the clock till eleven of the same day; and to have *the right ear of the said lazy begger cut off;*" and if the "said begger offend the third time, to be *again whipped,* and placed in the pillory, *and to have the other ear cut off.*" For a further violation of the "mendicancy law," the penalty was to "die on the public scaffold as a felon and an enemy to the commonwealth." It not unfrequently occurred that many of the men who underwent some of these punishments were scholars of Oxford or Cambridge, "decayed bookworms," who were turned out to make room for men of the "new learning;" others were classic monks, who had spent thirty and forty years translating Greek, Latin, and Hebrew manuscripts. "Tie the holy thieves* to the cart, *to be whipped naked till they fall to labour,*" was the language used by the agents of the executive of those times. What a strange recommendation to a country of a new religion, ushered in and followed up by such a state of things! A number of the friars who were disbanded were compelled to go through the country begging. Thorndale witnessed in Coventry "three old priests who were blind, and a boy leading them from door to door." The pension that was to be given to monks and nuns was quickly withdrawn in

* "The Holy Thieves" was the term adopted from Fish's Supplycacyon of Beggars.

the majority of cases. The "bookworms" were, in the estimation of such kind and disinterested critics as Richard Crumwell, the "real conspirators against reform and God's Word." Clerics who sought aid from the people were declared "lazy rogues and vagabonds," and were, by a special Statute of Henry VIII., condemned to be "*burnt on the right hand.*" Gregory Crumwell writes to his father in a bantering tone of this class of monks "thieving on the sly,"* or by "some pious device," as Francis Bryan would have it.

There was another class of persons more "dangerous to the State" than the "swineish brutes," or the "holy thieves,"—namely, the unemployed servants of the abbeys and convents—the masons, joiners, smiths, bakers, labourers, together with a vast number of small tenants who were dispossessed by the new landlords. These men averred hardily that they would neither beg nor starve. When connected with the religious houses those people were temperate and well-conducted. Driven to destitution by a rapacity so unexpected and general, they became furious, and joined in bands, seizing the flocks of the nobles and gentry, despoiling mansions, and levying contributions, wherever possible, on the agricultural and commercial classes. They also plundered the secular clergy, whom they accused of cowardice and collusion with the Crown against their good friends the monks.† They infested the highways day and night, and on the approach of danger took refuge in the woods or mountains. They showed no pity to the few new proprietors who fell into their hands,

* MS. State Paper Office, Second Series.

† Roger Radclyffe's *Changed Tymes in the Countre Parts.*

and far less mercy was bestowed upon themselves when captured by the landholders, or the irregular troops of the King. The next tree and a rope, or the sudden steel, were all the ceremonials used for their disposal—no form of law or trial. The King ordered proclamation to be made that “all highwaymen be hanged on the nearest tree as a warning to the followers of those lazy rogues called monks.”* On one occasion some two hundred starving men attacked six cartloads of provisions belonging to the King; a fierce struggle took place between the guard of the convoy and their hungry assailants, who succeeded in carrying off the spoil. On the following day, however, twenty of the highwaymen were captured, and at once “hanged, *without benefit of clergy*.”† Roger Ascham relates that the English highwaymen of those times were “brave and generous.”

Those scenes continued—despairing famine contending hopelessly against the might of armed wealth—until the steel, the gibbet, and the prison plague decimated, and transformed, and subjugated a people, who, for centuries, had stood pre-eminent for their moral qualities, their sturdy independence, and their social comfort. Bad has passed; worse remains to come. I shall return to this sad subject in another chapter, wherein the condition of England is displayed by contemporary and indisputable evidence.

* Royal Proclamations; Condition of the Realm; State Papers of Henry the Eighth's reign; Letters of Roland Lee.

† Radclyffe's Changed Tymes in the Countrie Parts.

CHAPTER VII.

A PLANTAGENET ON THE SCAFFLUD.

TOWARDS the close of 1539 the dark chambers of the Tower and the Fleet received several notable persons who were doomed for the headsman or the gibbet. The Marquis of Exeter and Lord Montague—the latter the brother to Reginald Pole—were consigned to the Tower; and on the following day Sir Edward Neville and several others were arrested. Next came the venerable Countess of Salisbury, then nearly seventy years of age. The usual charges of high treason were preferred against all the prisoners. It was alleged that they joined in a plot to “assassinate the King’s Highness, and to raise Reginald Pole to the throne by a marriage with the Princess Mary.” “Witnesses and documentary evidence” were produced—indeed, the organising skill of Chancellor Audley and Thomas Cromwell seldom failed in producing these “essentials to a just conclusion,” to use the words of Audley himself. Lords Exeter and Montague, Sir Edward Neville, two friars, and four persons of less note were all arraigned, found guilty, and speedily executed. Then the case of the “grand old Countess” succeeded. Distinguished for the best and most amiable qualities suited to adorn her sex and station, her treatment raised an almost universal sentiment

of sympathy. "She appears," observes Sharon Turner, "to have been a woman with a Roman mind, as to firmness, dignity, and fortitude." All her contemporaries speak of her as a woman of noble, generous, and kindly nature. Whiting states that there was "no such noble dame in all the land as the Countess of Salisbury." She was not condemned to death for four months after her son and other relatives perished on the scaffold. The Earl of Southampton and the Bishop of Ely were commanded by Lord Cromwell to arrest the Countess of Salisbury. The report they made to the Crown "on the matter with which they were charged" exhibits the bearing and character of this illustrious lady:—

"Yesterday (Nov. 13) we travelled with the Lady Salisbury till almost night. She would utter and confess little or nothing more than the first day she did, but she still stood and persisted in the denial of all. This day, although we entreated her, sometimes with mild words, and now roughly and aspertly, by traitoring her and her sons to the ninth degree, yet would she nothing utter, but utterly denieth all that is objected unto her. We suppose that there hath not been saw or heard of a woman so earnest, so manlike in countenance. We must needs deem that her sons have not made her privy nor participant of the bottom and pit of their stomachs or else she is the most arrant traitress that ever was seen."

The Commissioners then describe the plans they adopted to "affright her:" they found "some Bulls and other documents, which proved her sympathies to be rather with the Pope than with the King;" they describe her resolute bearing during the "investigation, searching, and journey." "We assure your lordships, we have dealt with such a one as men have not dealt with all before us. We may call her rather a strong and constant man than a

woman; for, in all behaviour, howsoever we have used her, she hath showed herself so earnest, vehement, and precise, that more could not be.”*

Lord Crumwell despatched a note to the King containing his own opinion of “the traitress.” “She,” the Countess, “hath been examined; and in effect she pretendeth ignorance, and no knowledge of the person that should report the tale. . . . I shall never cease until the bottom of her stomach may be clearly opened and disclosed.”

The Countess confessed no treason; had nothing to confess; to use her own words, but that her “first allegiance was due to *the Church*; the second to the throne and the realm.”† She possessed all the pride and courage of the Plantagenets.

There is no record extant of the exact charges made against the Countess of Salisbury; but we must accept that she was condemned under the special laws for high treason then in vogue. She remained a prisoner in the Tower for some eighteen months, during which period she was permitted to suffer incredible privations. “Want of warm clothing in winter; placed in a damp cell without fire; not sufficient bed covering, and bad food; added to this ill-treatment, the frequent and untimely visits of those ‘men of iron heart and grosser conduct’—the warders.”‡ To use her own words, she “was allowed one privilege, for which she was grateful, and valued more than fine dishes or

* MS. Cal. D. 11.

† Ellis, *Royal Letters*, pp. 112, 114, 115; *Strype's Memorials*, p. 521; Sharon Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. v.

‡ There is a diary extant in which Catherine Howard entered the names of various articles of warm clothing which she clandestinely sent to Lady Salisbury; but it is very possible that these things were never delivered.

good fires"—namely, her Latin Prayer Book, her golden Crucifix, and beads; the latter was the valued gift of King Henry's mother.*

The Marchioness of Exeter was impeached at the same time with Lady Salisbury, but was "pardoned for her uncommitted offence." Sharon Turner states that Henry "was not willing to take the Countess's life." But it is difficult to reconcile this statement with the circumstances of the case. After her lengthened confinement in the Tower (27th May), Lady Salisbury was informed that the King had issued his final order for her execution. "The King ordered," says Lord Herbert, "that the Countess of Salisbury should be carried to the place of execution, as she was *unable to walk, from the long suffering she had endured in a damp cell.*" Just as the Countess reached the scaffold, she seemed to have recovered much of her pristine energy of body and mind. When ordered to prepare for the block, she refused, and with the proud bearing of a Plantagenet, said, "I have committed no crime; I have had no trial. *If you cut off my head, then you shall take it as best you can.*" "With renewed energy of body she moved about *the scaffold*, and resisted the executioners, who pursued her with enormous knives or hatchets in hand, making dreadful blows at her neck, until she fell covered with wounds, and her long white hair and her hands were bathed with her life-blood. Finally, her head having been cut off, was held up to the gaze of the multitude."†

* English Matrons in the Tower and on the Scaffold. Printed in Brussels, A.D. 1560. Ambrose Fitzwalter states that the author of this little book was Sister Varney, one of the exiled nuns of Shaftesbury.

† Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.

"This venerable lady," writes Echard, "who was seventy years of age, was commanded to lay her head on the block, but she positively refused, saying: 'So should traitors do, but I am none.' Nor did it avail that the executioner told her that it was always customary to do so; but turning her grey head every way, she cried out: 'If you will have my head, get it as best you can.' So the executioner was constrained to take her head off barbarously."* Dodd and his contemporaries have accepted Herberts' account of the scene on the scaffold. Reginald Pole states that the last words of the Countess were: "Blessed are those who suffer persecution for righteousness' sake."† Mr. Froude questions Lord Herbert's statement as to the scene on the scaffold, although Hall, Burnet, and several other writers have regarded and chronicled it as a fact. Mr. Froude attributes, like Sharon Turner, every description of political intrigue and treason to the aged Countess, but with no better evidence than that adduced against most of those, distinguished or otherwise, who preceded her to the scaffold. "The manlike Margaret," observes Mr. Froude, "would have disdained and disclaimed indulgence on the plea of her sex, so that treason of women in the sixteenth century was no more considered to be entitled to immunity than their participation in grosser crimes is held in the nineteenth century. . . . A settled age can imperfectly comprehend an age of revolution, or realise the indifference with which men risk their own blood and shed the blood of others when battling for a great cause."‡

* Echard's *History of England*, vol. ii. p. 298.

† Reg. Pole, vol. iii. p. 76.

‡ Froude's *History of England*, vol. iv.

What was the "great cause" to which Mr. Froude refers ?

Lady Salisbury possessed the distinction of being a Countess in her own right, and historians have described her under the various names connected with her family. She was the daughter of George, Duke of Clarence, and Isabel Nevil, the eldest daughter of Richard, Earl of Warwick, the "setter-up and puller-down of kings." The Countess was also the niece of Edward IV., and therefore no very distant relative of Henry VIII. himself. Her brother, the Earl of Warwick, was impeached and beheaded, his only offence consisting in the fact of a close relationship to the Crown. The family received several warnings from Henry VII., whose suspicious mind was ever jealous of a Plantagenet. Margaret was compelled by Henry VII. to marry a Welsh knight named Richard de la Pole, by whom she had a large family, and "lived in love and peace." Her husband is described by a chronicle of the times "as a chivalrous knight and a good-natured man, who was much esteemed at Court, and respected by the people." In Henry VII.'s reign Lady Salisbury was placed in charge of the Royal children ; so that Henry VIII. had known her almost from his infancy. On the arrival of the Infanta (Katherine) from Spain, the Countess "conducted and arranged the young Princess's household." A feeling of mutual friendship sprang up between the lady companion and the Princess. When Katherine was married to Prince Arthur, the Countess was still attached to her household ; was at Ludlow at the period of Arthur's death ; was with the Princess during a great portion of her widowhood, and again at her marriage with Henry. Lady Salisbury stood amongst the noble ladies who

thronged around the King and Queen at their coronation ; when the Princess Mary was baptised, the royal infant was held at the font by Lady Salisbury. At the confirmation of Mary, she appeared, as what Queen Katherine styled her, "the old family friend and sponsor." At this period Henry seemed much attached to his kinswoman. He visited the royal nursery almost daily, and conversed freely with her ; he listened with pleasure to her tales about his own days of childhood ; he had perhaps heard of the sonnets written on the historical Margaret Plantagenet when styled the "Maid of the Golden Tresses." Time rolled on, and the "Maid of the Golden Tresses" became a feeble old woman, with snow-white hair, who was impeached for high treason—a prisoner for nearly two years in one of the dungeons of the Tower ; next, on the scaffold, defying the headsman in the strength of her innocence, and right royally meeting her death at the command of that kinsman whom she had nursed in childhood, and to whose own offspring she had accorded almost a mother's care. Now, I cannot but regard it strange that writers of the present day should describe Henry as "gentle and merciful," "a model of married life," &c. ; and all this with such facts before them ! Are not the students of history—nay, all lovers of truth—entitled to exclaim of such writers, with the Roman orator—"Quosque tandem abutere patientiâ nostra?"

CHAPTER VIII.

CATHERINE PARR.

CATHERINE, the widow of Lord Latymore, was selected by Henry to take the perilous position of his sixth wife. It is said this lady had the courage to tell him "that it was safer to be his concubine than his wife." He was, however, so little offended at this observation that he pursued his suit with characteristic impetuosity. Catherine had been twice married, and at this time contemplated a third match with a former lover, Sir Thomas Seymour, which ambition set aside for a time, and the "Adonis of the Court vanished from the scene." But three months intervened between the proving of her late husband's will and the marriage of Catherine with the King. Archbishop Cranmer, as commanded, issued a licence for the marriage, "to be performed in whatever church, chapel, or oratory, it might please his Highness the King to have his marriage celebrated." The marriage accordingly took place on Thursday, the 10th of July, 1543, at Hampton Court Palace. Stephen Gardyner, Bishop of Winchester, performed the ceremony—but, as we are assured, "with much reluctance." Gardyner dared not, however, refuse. This "sixth Queen" of Henry is historically known as Catherine Parr, and holds a prominent place amongst Miss Strickland's heroines of the Reformation epoch. The "piety and learning" attributed to her by Miss

Strickland would be somewhat marvellous, if the reputation thus accorded by her gifted biographer were borne out by facts. Catherine Parr was the patroness, if not the instigator, of many complicated intrigues to promote the Reformation, which were openly avowed on the death of the King. Her duplicity in religious matters was perfect : she attended Mass with the King, whilst her chaplains, publicly celebrating Catholic ceremonies, privately attended her Protestant "prayer meetings." In fact, Henry was under the impression, till near his end, that his wife was of the Catholic faith. What good cause could, or should, be promoted by deceit like this? Or how can any honest pen defend such double-faced conduct, unless the defence be grounded on that long-standing falsehood alleged against an illustrious order—"the end sanctifies the means?" Cranmer, Poynt, Coverdale, Ridley, Jewell, Barlow, and Parker, were amongst Catherine Parr's clerical advisers. She was also surrounded by the Seymours, the Herberts, the Russells, the Dudleys, the Hobys, the Throckmortons, and all those men and women who played a part in the sad scenes of the reigns of Edward and Mary. In another chapter the reader will see more of the history of this last consort of Henry the Eighth.

CHAPTER IX.

THE KEEPER OF "THE KING'S CONSCIENCE."

THOMAS AUDLEY was born in the latter end of Henry VII.'s reign. He is said to have been "of a distinguished family, which had long flourished in the county of Essex." Dugdale doubts his having been a member of the old Audley family of Essex, and Roger Stratford contends that he was an illegitimate son of a member of the House of Audley, his real name being Thomas Whitechurch. Morant alleges that he was of "very obscure origin, and that little was known of his early beginning." He had, however, very small means to commence life as a law student. His early education was neglected. His industry and powers of perseverance, however, were immense. When he entered at Magdalen College, Cambridge, he quickly attracted notice as a studious and well-behaved youth. At this time Stratford relates that he was "very pious, and attended Mass and all other rites, at the times appointed." He next appeared at the Inner Temple, where he devoted himself steadily to the study of common law, and discharged the duties of "Autumn Reader" to the Society with some reputation. Shortly after young Maister Audley was called to the degree of "Utter Barrister." The term "Utter Barrister" occurs for the first time in the reign of Henry VIII. It is mentioned in the "Orders and Customs" of the Middle

Temple, where it was applied to one who, having continued in the house for five or six years, and profited in the study of the law, had been called by the benchers to "plead, argue, and dispute some doubtful matter before certain of the benchers," which manner of argument or disputations is called *motyng*; and this making of "Utter Barristers" was a preferment or degree given him for his learning.*

Maister Audley rose quickly in practice. His skill in the technicalities of the profession, and eager desire to please his clients, acquired him much business, and it was reported that persons who "loved litigation and crooked ways" laid their cases before Maister Audley, who was "almost sure to procure a favourable hearing, and judgment on their behalf." Audley is said to have been "very much liked of persons who frequented the law courts." He is reputed by some to have been liberal with his purse in the cause of charity, and his hospitality was profuse. Concurrent testimony speaks well of him then as a man as well as a lawyer. He is described as tall and handsome in person, with the most fascinating manners. Roger Stratford relates that he was "particularly admired by the *fayre dames of qualitie in Londyn and the countrie parts*."

The judges in Audley's time had to pay a "subsidy" of £5 per cent. to the King "on their receipts!" The salaries and fees were wretchedly small, and utterly insufficient to support an equitable and impartial judge; the result was inevitable as things went. The judges received presents from the lawyers and attorneys, and not unfrequently from the suitors—a procedure well understood to be for "some

* Dugdale's Orig., p. 194.

consideration." It is stated by a learned commentator on the contemporary bench, that if the denunciations against the corruption of the judges, in the sermons of Hugh Latimer and others, were, as they no doubt are, well-founded, the scanty pittance given by the Crown, if not actually intended to instigate them to make up the deficiency by fleecing the suitors, will, in a great measure, account for the black mail levied by judges.* In the "fleecing" of clients Thomas Audley was quite at home, whether as an advocate or as a judge; but in all fairness it must be stated that he was no exception amongst his learned brethren.

In the twelfth year of Henry VIII. Maister Audley was created a serjeant-at-law, and soon perceived that although to mingle in the politics of the times was accompanied by peril, it opened the quickest road to influence and emolument. In 1523 he entered the House of Commons, when Sir Thomas More was Speaker. In the Commons Audley soon gained popularity by maintaining the privileges of the House, and resisting the frequent demands made by Wolsey for fresh subsidies. He soon, however, perceived that the popular side was not the winning one, and retracing his steps, took part with the Court; and pronounced eulogies on Cardinal Wolsey, declaring that those who "opposed the subsidies were disloyal," and at other times styled them "heretics." This "loyal and good Catholic" lawyer soon shared in Royal favour. During the interval of six years, when no Parliament was permitted to sit by the benignant Monarch, Maister Audley aided and abetted the Court in all its schemes for raising money and oppressing

* Foss's Judges of England, vol. v. p. 100.

the people.* Deep discontent arose, and many of Audley's financial suggestions were reluctantly abandoned. "Against such a Monarch as Henry," observes Lord Campbell, "and with such tools as Audley, the only remedy for public wrong was resistance." But, with the pervading servility then obtaining as to the King's omnipotence, resistance was impossible. When the question of the divorce with Katherine of Arragon was raised, Audley entered at once into the King's views, and when he subsequently saw Wolsey withdraw from the contest, in remorseful fear of its results, he began to aspire to the Chancellorship. Here, however, he was baffled—but for a while. A man of his ductility was not necessary just at the time, and it was considered more prudent to appoint Sir Thomas More—a marvellous inappositeness as nature goes. Audley was, however, elected Speaker of the Commons, which met in the November of 1529.† This "legislative assembly" was called the "Black Parliament," owing to the first attack being made on the Papal power. In the King's design to break off relations with Rome he was earnestly supported by the new Speaker. Henry was well pleased with the manner in which Thomas Audley managed affairs in the Commons. The venal and the timid were alike secured. The interests of the poor in convents and monasteries had in Audley an avaricious and

* The custom of the Plantagenet Sovereigns was to call Parliament together every year, but the despotic Tudors acted on the opposite principle, for they rarely convoked the Legislature unless when in want of a "subsidy." Elizabeth's conduct in this respect showed the special contempt entertained by her race for a "representative" Chamber.

† From the days of Sir Thomas More till the Revolution, the Speakership of the Commons was held, with two exceptions, by lawyers (Townshend's History of the English Commons).

dangerous foe, and the heads of those institutions accordingly sent him many presents of game, "some jewellery, and letters full of praise." This was an exact imitation of Lord Crumwell's mode of action.

When Sir Thomas More resigned the Great Seal in 1532, Audley nearly reached the height of his ambition. Lord Campbell says, "Henceforth, till his death in 1544, Chancellor Audley promoted the iniquitous measures brought forward in Parliament, and was the chief agent in the homicides committed by the instrumentality of legal process."* Audley achieved deserved infamy for his part in the impeachment and sham trial of More and Fisher. When even Crumwell felt ashamed to prosecute those illustrious men, Audley chided him for what he styled his "love of sentiment," displayed in himself the most cold-blooded frankness, and disdained to hide his deadly purpose, as Crumwell affected, or to profess a false friendship, like the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The measures for the suppression of the monastic houses; the selection of the inquisitors; the "particular reports" which were to be presented to the King, of the alleged condition of the convents, were all arranged in "legal form" for Lord Crumwell by the Chancellor. The Bills for the "separation from Rome," and the punishment of those who dissented from the King on religious subjects, also emanated from Audley. Like Crumwell, he "struck terror into all Churchmen." Bishops and Abbots became silent, absent, or subservient; the unavowed Reformers hated, yet courted him; he intimated approbation of their supposed views, yet sent those

* Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i.

who avowed them to the stake as heretics. Having used every means to promote the divorce between Henry and Katherine of Arragon, and raising Anna Boleyn to the throne, he next joined Crumwell and his party to bring about Anna's ruin. As Chancellor he took a leading part in her accusation and consequent condemnation. He investigated the case, declaring that the witnesses were all "trustworthy persons." The mode of arresting the unhappy lady was of his arrangement, and the commissioners who tried her were partly selected by him. "He acted," writes a spectator, "more like a brute to the poor Queen than a merciful judge." This is a mistake; Audley was not one of the judges. He was present as the assessor, and sat at the Duke of Norfolk's right hand during the trial. He had not been raised to the peerage at this period; consequently he could not vote with the Lords Commissioners, who were all Lords of the Upper Chamber; but he supplied the legal "suggestions." Sir Thomas Audley's next step was to join Archbishop Cranmer in the divorce which the King demanded between himself and Queen Anna, declaring that she "had never been the King's lawful wife"—that the marriage was "null and void." Yet Audley aided in sending her to the scaffold for "adultery committed as the wife of King Henry." This transaction alone is sufficient to cover with disgrace the memory of the King's Chancellor. Lord Campbell, in reviewing Audley's conduct towards Anna Boleyn, observes, "It is well that Henry did not direct that Audley should officiate as executioner, with Cranmer as his assistant; for they probably would have obeyed sooner than give up the Seals or the Primacy."* Upon the marriage of Jane Seymour,

* Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i. p. 604.

Sir Thomas Audley received the reward of his conduct during the trial of Anna Boleyn. He was raised to the peerage—a fitting colleague for Lords Crumwell and Wiltshire.

The Bill for “bastardising” Mary and Elizabeth was another measure brought forward by Chancellor Audley. It was declared by this statute that “whosoever styled Mary or Elizabeth as the King’s daughters was guilty of high treason.” Lord Audley was not yet done with trials and executions. He presided as Lord High Chancellor of England at the trial of Courtenay, Marquis of Exeter, and Lord de la Pole Montague, whom the King “disliked because they were his cousins.” The charges against these noblemen were frivolous: “They corresponded with another relative, Reginald Pole.” Audley procured a conviction, and their way to the scaffold was brief. About this time the “jealous-minded Chancellor” felt that his share of the monastic property fell short of that bestowed on some of his fellows: he therefore wrote to Crumwell and the King. His letters are, perhaps, the most marvellously despicable ever written by any man in judicial office.* In one passage he urges his claims in these words: “I have in this world sustained great damage *and infamy* in serving the King’s Highness, *which this grant shall recompense.*” The King and Lord Crumwell complied with his request. There was no denying the “*vacuus viator*”—the old homes of religion and hospitality could yet afford plunder to a comrogue, and Audley, as Chancellor of England, was “ordered to put

* See Letters on Suppression of Monasteries, by the Camden Society, p. 245; also Dugdale, Stephens, and Thorndale.

the Great Seal to the grant of the manors he desired." He "wanted more"—a rich sinecure followed; then the Order of the Garter. On the passing of the Six Articles, Audley was vehement against the Reformers; he entered, of course, into all the King's mystical scruples; denounced the claims of the Pope one day, and of the Reformers the next. On the occasion of Henry's marriage with Anne of Cleves, he was guided by the unprincipled cunning which is the offspring of a despot's caprice in all bad men; and when his "beloved friend," Lord Cromwell, was impeached, he was foremost to assure his condemnation. His conduct to the aged Countess of Salisbury is the most heartless on record. He gave Cranmer the "benefit of his legal advice" in dissolving the marriage of Anne of Cleves. He next promoted the marriage of Catherine Howard; he would have "no more heretic Queens"—Catherine, he kindly allowed, was a "good Catholic;" and he flattered the King on the "beauty of his little Queen." Again a change. Audley secretly joined Cranmer's party once more: the Howards became too powerful for the Reformers. The Chancellor feared the "cause of the Gospel would suffer"—which meant that the *recent confiscations might be retaken or their distribution reconsidered*. Archbishop Cranmer having disclosed to him the suspicions he had formed of the inconstancy of Catherine, the virtuous Chancellor was outwardly horrified, but inwardly delighted. The investigation and impeachment of the Queen were brief. Catherine Howard and "all concerned (as the reader has seen in a preceding section of this work) in the accusation perished on the scaffold in a few days later." Audley, Suffolk, and Cranmer had soon again important business on hand, being now zealously engaged in arranging the King's *sixth*

marriage with Catherine Parr, whose Protestantism was "very gratifying," both to the Lord Chancellor and the Archbishop of Canterbury—that is, to a Chancellor who had rejoiced in a penultimate Catholic spouse, and to an Archbishop who still pretended to be a Catholic. A Bill to regulate the succession, and define the supremacy of the King in spiritual matters was among the final public acts of Lord Audley.* Audley held the Great Seal for a period of twelve years, during which, to please the humours of his master, he sanctioned, as Lord Chancellor, the divorces of that master's three wives—the execution of two of them; the judicial murders of Bishop Fisher, Sir Thomas More, and many others, who, animated by their example, preferred death to violation of conscience and dishonour; the spoliation of the Church, and a large division of the plunder amongst those who planned that spoliation; the recognition of the King as "Christ's Vicar on earth;" the condemnation to the stake of those who denied Transubstantiation, and to the scaffold "all manner of persons" who had the honesty or the courage to reject the Royal supremacy;—such is the true apotheosis of this English Chancellor; such were the chief actions of Thomas Audley, who, as Lord Chancellor, was the "keeper of Henry the Eighth's conscience."

Amongst the numerous grants and favours conferred by the King upon Audley was that of the Charter House, the property of the celebrated Order of Carthusians. As the reader is aware, this monastic house was founded in 1349 by Sir Walter de Mauny, a chivalrous knight in the train of Edward III. in his French wars. At the time of the Reformation, the Charter House property was valued at £736 per

* Lord Campbell's English Chancellors, vol. i.

annum—equal to about £12,000 of our present money. Christ Church, within Aldgate, founded by the Empress Maud in 1108, was also conferred upon Audley.

Lord Campbell states that Audley has not much attracted the notice of historians; perhaps from party or sectarian motives he has been so ignored. He was undoubtedly, at best, the creature of Crumwell, Cranmer, and the other so-called Reformers of Henry's reign. He aided heartily in the monastic confiscation, and shared Cranmer's notions of the spiritual headship; practised with religion as the King and the Boleyns did, and promoted the Reformation by indirect means through profligate selfishness. Like the Seymours, he participated in the Holy Eucharist at the same altar with the King, who might be absolved by posterity of this needless sacrilege if the testimony of his terrible hypocrisy were not too potent for discredit. The belief of a man like Audley would be difficult to define: total negation of creed would be the nearest approach to the truth. And this was the successor of Sir Thomas More as Lord Chancellor of England! What a striking contrast between the two—Audley, the successor of a lawyer so distinguished for genius, learning, patriotism, and integrity, having only commonplace abilities, sufficient, with cunning and shrewdness, to raise their possessor in the world; having no acquired knowledge beyond what was professional and official; having first recommended himself to promotion by defending, in the House of Commons, the abuses of the Royal prerogative, and for the sake of remaining in office, being ever willing to submit to any degradation and to join in the commission of any crime.*

* Lord Campbell's *English Chancellors*, vol. i.

Mr. Foss concurs in the opinion of Dean Maitland and later writers as to the evil reputation of the early English Reformers. "The Reformation, the foundations of which were laid in Henry's reign, though producing immense results to this country, brings nothing but disgrace on its active originators. Commenced by a sensual tyrant in defiance of the religious tenets which he had himself advocated, and which he still professed, the power of the Pope was abjured solely in revenge for the Papal refusal to sanction his divorce; his own imposed supremacy was only used to introduce doctrines which it was equally difficult for Catholics or Reformers to adopt, each suffering in turn from the dilemma in which they were placed; the monasteries were dissolved, *not for the professed purposes of purification, but for the sake of the plunder* they produced to the King's treasury, and to supply the means of rewarding the subservient minions of his power."*

Mr. Foss fully agrees with the judgment passed by Lord Campbell upon the character of Audley. "Lord Chancellor Audley's interpretations of the law on the various criminal trials at which he presided are a disgrace not only to him, but to every member of the bench associated with him, while both branches of the legislature are equally chargeable with the ignominy of passing the Statutes he introduced, periling every man's life by the new treasons they invented, and every man's conscience by the contradictory oaths they imposed. It is a degradation to the pious and excellent Sir Thomas More to mention him even in contrast with such a man as Audley; and the name of More's less

† Foss's Judges of England, vol. v. p. 129.

estimable predecessor, Cardinal Wolsey, acquires an added brightness, when the moderation of his ministry, during the earlier years of Henry's reign, is compared with the persecuting spirit which prevailed while Lord Audley presided as the Lord High Chancellor of England."*

Of the last days of Lord Audley little is known. He died after a protracted illness, which he is reported to have borne with "fortitude and resignation." It is alleged that "a Benedictine friar attended the quondam Reformer daily during his illness; that the noble patient dictated letters to several persons whom he had formerly injured; ordered alms to be dispensed amongst the indigent, and Masses to be celebrated for his soul's health!" These statements of Roger Stratford appear of questionable verity; it is far more probable that his end was like his wicked life, and that he passed away in final impenitence. A close review of Audley's actions at once condemns him. He was thoroughly unprincipled, false, treacherous, mean, and cowardly. He professed friendship for many, and may have sworn such amities; but friendship in him had no real existence. His piety as a Catholic was of course simulated to aid in promoting his worldly interests. With all these ignoble qualities artfully concealed—for a time at least—Thomas Audley, we are told, won "much popular favour." But what, then, was that hydra—the people? When the period of Audley's political advancement arrived, the King was not slow in discovering that he had at last, according to *his* ideas of equity, put "the right man in the right place." It has been said that the best apology

* Judges of England, vol. v. p. 133.

for Wolsey is the contrast between the middle and the later years of his life. Lord Audley's most severe condemnation must be a review of those crimes persisted in during his entire term of power, of which crimes and injustices, if he did not deliberately prompt and commit them, he was an active abettor. It may be observed of Audley, as Dean Hook has remarked of Cranmer, "that in every infamous action of Henry he found a seconder" in his Lord High Chancellor, as he did in his Archbishop of Canterbury. In fact, the Primate and the Chancellor were willing to do any illegal action which the King suggested.

The only circumstance that rescues the name of Thomas Audley from entire infamy is his appropriation of part of his ill-gotten wealth to the restoration of the College in Cambridge, which Edward Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, had founded two years before his death, and left incomplete. Audley procured its incorporation, and endowed it with considerable property which had formerly belonged to the convent of the Holy Family. He obtained the King's licence to change its name of Buckingham College to that of St. Mary Magdalen, which it now bears.

In almost equal measure of our indebtedness to the truthful and honourable historian, Camden, we owe to Sir Henry Spelman the record of many interesting circumstances referring to the notables of the Tudor dynasty.

Sir Henry Spelman makes an odd remark concerning Lord Audley,—that he was one of those persons "punished for sacrilege by leaving no male heirs." Audley left an only daughter, dowerless, who married the Duke of Norfolk, whom Elizabeth put to death for his endeavour to free the Royal captive of Tutbury Castle—Mary Stuart. Had Audley

lived till the reign of the "Good Queen Bess," he would have realised a retribution more strange than the fanciful stigma of Sir Henry Spelman, as he would have seen the daughter of that Queen upon whose trial he had sat in judgment, and to whose judicial murder he had lent the aid of his talents, sign the death-warrant of his *own beloved daughter's husband*. Many cases resembling terrible retributive justice occurred in the reign of Elizabeth, and again under the ill-starred Stuarts.

CHAPTER X.

"THE MEN OF THE TIME."

RICHARD FOXE, Bishop of Winchester, was one of the most excellent prelates of his time. Long before Wolsey appeared upon the scene, Dr. Foxe was a valuable member of the Privy Council. He sat in the Council Chamber with Warham in the reign of Henry VII., and took a prominent part in the proceedings relative to Pope Julian's dispensation. He held a high opinion of the prerogatives and spiritual powers of the Roman Pontiff. Henry VIII. considered him far-seeing, and able as a diplomatist. "He is always on the look-out, like his namesake of the field," was the saying of the King, who sometimes would add—"I cannot get on with my business without my Winchester Fox." Dr. Foxe, like Bishop Fisher, was regarded with special favour by Henry's grandmother, the Countess of Richmond. Dr. Brewer's State Paper researches place the name of Foxe as "the most worthy of the English prelates. He was the most devout and gentle amongst the King's Council."* He held the office of Lord Treasurer to the entire satisfaction of the Sovereign and the Parliament; but he often expressed regret that his employment at Court kept him away so much from his diocese, where, he re-

* Brewer's Domestic State Papers.

marked, "his real duties called him." Wolsey's correspondence with him shows how much he disliked the occupation of a politician. He felt it inconsistent with his duties as a prelate to be engaged so much in secular affairs, and still more in the intrigues of a Court. "The noblest minds of the time," writes Dr. Brewer, "often experienced the bitter struggle between the King and their conscience, and there were others as well as Dr. Foxe who regretted that they had neglected their spiritual calling in order to govern the State." Foxe, who had been Wolsey's patron and friend, subsequently took part with his opponents. He wrote to the King, "not to suffer the servant to be greater than the master." Henry replied, that "he knew well how to retain all his subjects in obedience, but he had undivided confidence in the wisdom and honesty of the Cardinal of York."* Dr. Foxe was one of the prelates who assented to the marriage of Henry and Katharine. He had undoubting confidence in the statement forwarded by Katharine of Arragon to Pope Julian concerning her marriage with Prince Arthur. Giustiniani represents Foxe as a "prelate of extreme authority, which he exercises with moderation and goodness." Almost every foreign ambassador of distinction who visited England in the days of Wolsey speaks of Foxe in terms of high esteem. He was a munificent patron of learning; the steady friend of the architect, the painter, the poet, and the scholar. His mansions afforded a quiet home to those whose hopes were blighted and whose genius the world left unnoticed. Such is an outline of the character of the prelate who preceded

* Brewer's State Papers.

Wolsey and Gardynier in the See of Winchester. Conscientious Churchmen were reluctant politicians in those days. The King was often compelled to seek their services, owing to the ignorance and incapacity of the nobles. For instance, three of the most powerful noblemen who were contemporaries of Foxe and Fisher—namely, the Dukes of Buckingham and Suffolk and the Marquis of Dorset—were notably deficient in education.* They were, of course, brave in the field and hospitable in their baronial halls, but at the Council Board they were imprudent advisers for the Crown, and arrogantly hostile to the scanty privileges of the people. Dr. Foxe lived to a very advanced age, and had the misfortune to lose his sight several years before his death, which occurred in 1528. He had been a special favourite of Henry VII., who placed him in relation of godfather to his second son, Henry. Dr. Foxe enjoyed the goodwill of the people in his diocese, where the poor were never neglected. Notwithstanding his extensive learning, statesmanship, piety, and worth, however, he had little influence in Convocation.† The King affected much respect for his godfather, but was well known to dislike him. Some time before his death he spoke almost prophetically as to the coming storm upon the Church; Churchmen, nevertheless, paid little attention to his warnings.

The conduct of prelates like Dr. Lee was at this period most disastrous to the well-being of the olden Church. Lee was well aware of the condition of religion in Germany, whose myriad herrzogs, ritters, and their free-lances were making

* Brewer's Domestic State Papers.

† Collier's Ecclesiastical History; Thorndale's Memorials.

sad havoc of the Church's temporalities, whilst her spiritualities were subjected to the sneers and persecutions of her faithless ministers. Dr. Lee could easily discern what might occur in England by making a profligate and passionate tyrant the head of a Church which owned Christ only as its founder and its source Divine. Lee, and many like him, believed, but acted against belief—had a conscience, but ignored it, and sacrificed to worldly motives the convictions of their souls. In the bosom of the English Church were that Church's worst enemies—unconscious foes, perhaps, who did not forecast the wreck their want of integrity and courage was doomed to produce. It should not be necessary to say that the Historian must not be swayed from his stern duty by consideration of the exalted position of this or that notable, ecclesiastic or lay, at the period of the Reformation. Inasmuch as their belief must perforce have been more sacred, and their perceptions clearer, the conduct of the clergy who abetted Henry's proceedings was far worse than that of the laity. There can be no hesitation in denouncing Archbishop Lee's sermons in defence of Henry's marriage with Anna Boleyn as unprincipled, though eloquent effusions.* What a contrast these sermons and similar discourses present to the fervid remonstrance of Father Peto—that man of unbending virtue, who to their faces branded Henry and Anna as holding a position unrecognised by religion ! Peto preserved his head—which fact goes far to show that if the King had not found temporising and elastic prelates, the great wrongs which were perpetrated against the Church might never

* Dr. Lee's Sermons in favour of the "King's Scruples."

have been committed. The name of Father Peto is inscribed with honour on the roll of History, whilst the tardy and fruitless recantations of Lee, and the impenitent silence of others, merely point the old moral, "that the first step to guilt should be the most carefully avoided." Henry Griffin states that Dr. Lee, on his death-bed, expressed his deepest remorse for having abetted Henry in his marriage with Anna Boleyn, and his quarrel with the Pope, though, as I have expressed in so many other instances, neither the King nor he had the most remote notion of changing the creed of the English nation. They both believed, but acted against their belief, so let their crime be measured by their faith. Anthony Wood has recorded a warm testimony to the "charity and goodness of Dr. Lee to the poor." The report made to the King by Lee and Tunstall as to their interview with the deposed Queen, in reference to Cranmer's judgment, the King's marriage, and the proximate birth of Elizabeth, is a remarkable document. In one passage the two bishops aver that they styled Archbishop Cranmer's judgment "*a lawful sentence*," and added, that "*public thanks had been given for the marriage and the birth*;" for to Queen Katharine both events were contemporaneously announced. There can be no hesitation in pronouncing the conduct of those prelates unworthy of the position they held as mere moralists, not to say Churchmen. In her dignified reply Queen Katharine declared her belief that Cranmer was merely the "King's shadow;" that "in her conscience she still regarded herself as a wife and a Queen from which no earthly power could divorce her."* So Dr. Lee sadly

* State Papers of the Reign of Henry VIII.; Queens of England, vol. ii.

passed away with the "brand of the Shepherd who had neglected to do his duty to the Fold."

Although the name of Dr. EDWARD FOX (not to be confounded with Richard Foxe) does not appear prominent in the divorce controversy, he was one of the most active of those engaged in its promotion. He subsequently appears in concert with Archbishops Lee, Cranmer, Crumwell, and Latimer, in "advising and amending" the Liturgy of the Church; proclaiming the King and not the Pope as its spiritual head. The reader may, therefore, conjecture to what party he would have ultimately allied himself from the passing panegyric of Latimer, who said of him, "Surely, we owe great thanks to Dr. Fox for his diligence in all our proceedings." Fox corresponded with Erasmus and other learned foreigners. He possessed considerable ability, and in the words of his contemporary, Stephen Oldgate, "he had an honest and virtuous reputation, and did not forget the claims of the poor upon him as a bishop." "It is singular," writes the Rev. J. H. Blunt, "how small a space in history is occupied by Edward Fox, and yet how great a man he seems to have been!" Fox died of the plague in 1537. The adherents of Queen Katharine pronounced his death to be a "visitation for upholding Anna Boleyn's cause." He has been claimed as a partisan of the Reformation; but the only title for that claim is, that he aided in those preliminary acts which led eventually to the subversion of the olden creed—a change rendered personally necessary to those who desired and would hold the property of others. Dodd, with good reason, remarks that Bishop Fox's opinions concerning the King's supremacy, and his book against the See of Rome, do not prove that he adopted the principles of the Reformers.

"Catholics," says Dodd, "look upon Edward Fox as they do upon the rest of the bishops of those days—that the greater part of them were swayed by worldly interests or fear to act contrary to their belief."* Several Protestant writers hold a similar opinion of the bishops, and the convocation too.†

Dr. ROLAND LEE, who performed the marriage between the King and Anna Boleyn, ended his days as Bishop of Lichfield. He was a "plausible, cunning man, who contrived to live on good terms with the contending parties." He received a portion of the monastic property, which, it is stated, he bequeathed to his relatives. Some Puritan writers claim him as a Reformer; but there is no foundation for their assumption; for like Gardynier, Bonner, and other agents of the King, he never wavered in his belief, though by his conduct he inflicted upon the olden creed much injury and discredit. He took the oath of supremacy to the King; and in his sermons described Henry "as an amiable and holy Prince."

JOHN LONGLAND, Bishop of Worcester, the King's confessor, does not seem to have merited the censures cast upon him by some writers. He was much esteemed when connected with the University of Oxford. There is no charge against his reputation as a prelate, though some of his contemporaries considered him "weak-minded and vain." While confessor to the King, it is stated that he exercised a salutary influence over him; but upon the succession of Cranmer to power, the Confessor was dismissed. Longland, seeing the state of the Continent, was strongly opposed to the

* Dodd's Church History, vol. i. p. 184.

† See Wilkins, vol. iii. p. 767.

Reformers, yet never persecuted any man for his opinions. John Foxe, however, has informed posterity that Bishop Longland was a persecutor of the Reformers. "John Longland," says Maister Foxe, "was a fierce and cruel vexer of the faithful and true servants of Christ."* For this assertion, like so many other statements of the "Martyrologist," I can nowhere discover any credible grounds. Longland, in the absence of Dr. Lee, Archbishop of York, officiated at the consecration of Cranmer as Archbishop of Canterbury.

ROBERT WAKEMAN, Bishop of Gloucester, died in 1549. At the period of the Monastic Inquisition, Wakeman was Abbot of Tewkesbury, and, having misrepresented his brethren, and belied the truth to Lord Crumwell, received a pension. He was subsequently "transformed" into a bishop. Dodd remarks that his "religion, like that of many others at that time, sat easy upon him." He was a man of light morals. His natural son, Roger Wingfield, was a Baptist preacher in the reign of Elizabeth, and most violent against the creed of his fathers.

JOHN SKIP, the successor of Edward Fox in the See of Hereford, "offered," says Thorndale, "some suggestions to his kinsman, Dean Layton, as to how the nunneries were to be suddenly surprised;" he took the oath of supremacy as to the King; preached against the Pope, like his contemporary Tunstal, and was "generally agreeable to the measures of the Court." Nevertheless, he had no sympathies with the Reformers, although he has been represented as much attached to the principles of the "new learning." On the contrary, he wrote a severe reprimand

* Foxe, vol. ii. p. 820.

to Latimer for entertaining his friends to a "dinner of flesh, fowl, wines, and dainties on Good Friday." A commentator on Dodd asks, with some point, "What superior spirit of intelligence suddenly arose to set aside the pre-existing observance of fasts in the Church? Was it likely that full license in eating and drinking, and indulgence of the passions, were calculated to render the adopters of the new religion better than their sires and predecessors?" Bishop Skip died in 1539-40, deploring the mischief he had caused to religion by supporting the King's policy in Church and State.*

JOHN LELAND was considered the "best and most learned antiquarian England had produced up to the period of the Monastic confiscation." At the command of King Henry he entered upon the examination of the Monastic libraries and records, upon which task he bestowed seven years of genial and, it would seem, conscientious labour. His report has been described as the most interesting and valuable document that Leland ever penned. He remonstrated with Lord Crumwell on the destruction of the libraries, but Crumwell attached very little value to books, and gave less heed to the appeal of bookworms like Leland, upon whom the wholesale destruction of the libraries had such an effect that he lost his senses and died a lunatic,—a sacrifice to a helpless consciousness of a cruel Vandal wrong to literature and to knowledge. Leland was a signal scholar for his time, a poet and an orator, reading Greek, Latin, French, Spanish, and Italian. He was also well versed in the old Saxon and Pictish languages, which made him qualified for

* See Godwin, Griffin, Anthony Wood, and Dodd.

examining the MS. libraries of the abbeys. Of all the subsequent writers on antiquities, Camden and Sir William Dugdale appear to be the only two who had the generosity to acknowledge that they received their information from the brain-racking labours of John Leland. The best evidence that can be adduced against the allegation recently put forward to the effect that Lord Crumwell was "a patron of learning, and loved books," is to be found in his treatment of the great MS. libraries, and of such men as John Leland. Crumwell had no sympathy for, or with, the valuable and innocent labours of the grand old antiquarian whose name is to be found chronicled in the records of so many European universities. At a later period the name of John Leland was dismissed by the preachers and Puritans with contempt. "He was a silly old Papist, and the collector of Popish superstitions." To the honour of Poynt and Bale—both well read in the learning of the epoch—they denounced this comment in forcible language.

Maister SIMON FISH, a "gentleman" of Gray's Inn (1523), was the author of many indecent lampoons on Wolsey, and subsequently on the religious orders. He wrote a book entitled "The Supplication of Beggars," and also a play. "His play I have not seen," observes Dodd, "but if it is written in the same strain with the 'Supplication of Beggars,' then his memory is infamous." "The Supplication of Beggars" has been printed by Dodd, for the information of the student of history.* It is a statement addressed to Henry VIII., calling his attention to the alleged crimes of Churchmen, and is, perhaps, one of the most abominable documents put forth at that evil epoch, or

* Dodd's Church History, vol. i. pp. 304-309.

at any period. It charges bishops, abbots, priests, monks, and nuns, with every crime that could enter into the most depraved mind. To draw the picture of shocking immorality, wholesale dishonesty, sacrilege, and hypocrisy, produced by that fearful imagination, proves the possession of a signal perfection in falsehood. John Foxe and the "Hot Gospel" writers for two hundred years—and even now, so far as the bigots dare venture upon its impurities—have been quoting and supplementing, in different forms, the wretched "Supplication of Beggars," to which doubtless are likewise due many prurient passages in those novels of the past century which disgraced the literature as well as the good taste of England. A writer in the *Westminster Review* (January, 1871), in a paper on Henry VIII.'s reign, has printed some extracts from Fish's "Supplication," and in doing so implies the writer's belief that the picture there drawn was a true presentment of the state of the religious houses.* The fact was, that Simon Fish, like other patronless and worthless lawyers of the time—loungers about taverns, "half gentlemen and whole raps"—was subsidised to draw up and publish any description of calumnious falsehood to prepare the way for the preconcerted perjuries of Layton, London, and the other inquisitors. It cannot be too often repeated, that no phase of English history has been so foully and falsely misrepresented as that which embraces the plunder and the destruction of the religious institutions. The writer in the *Westminster*, however, makes an admission regarding

* Sir Thomas More condescended to reply to the "Supplication of Beggars," by a pamphlet entitled the "Supplication of Souls," merely because he saw that Fish would never have dared to publish his obscene falsehoods if he had not potent and designing patrons.

the profession of which Fish was a member, that shows the lawyerdom of the time in most unpleasant colours: "Lawyers seem to have been especially corrupt, from the highest to the lowest."* Fish was the friend of Tyndale,† who is described by many learned commentators as "the first translator of a spurious Bible." What reader of the least varied research does not revolt at hearing so much about translations of the Bible—a book which, according to the *Westminster Review*, has never, in the Protestant sense, been translated "properly." Even so, *quoad istos judices*. The Bible, however, had been translated by the Catholic Church a century and a quarter before Luther was born. Of course, those early Continental translations have not been *sub judicio* beneath the roof of the grand old Abbey.‡ But the vaunted translations of the early English Reformers—Tyndale's alleged composite one, for instance—are no interpretations at all. The statement that the Catholic Church left it to the Reformers to "first give the Bible to the people," is so patent a fiction that even the most forbearing student of history must refer its repetition to malice rather than ignorance.

Fish was one of the very few who attempted to impeach the character of the Carthusian Fathers. Amongst Lord

* In Bernard Gilpin's Sermons, preached in the presence of judges and lawyers in Henry's reign, and also in that of Edward VI., the reader will find a marvellously bold, but lamentably true, description of the venality and turpitude to be found in the legal profession of the period.

† It is a curious fact that Tyndale argued strongly against the King's divorce. He had, however, some notions which most phases of Protestantism would deem decidedly unorthodox, respecting forbidden degrees of kindred in marriage, when he pointedly suggested a union between the Princess Mary and young Henry Fitzroy.—See Brewer's State Papers (Domestic).

‡ See Lingard, vol. v. p. 110.

Crumwell's and Chancellor Audley's agents there were few who so debased themselves from sheer venality and depravity of heart as this Simon Fish. Another of his productions was an impious *brochure* of sixteen pages, entitled "The Jolly Monks Surprised," purporting to represent a visit to Reading, Glastonbury, and Bolton Abbeys. This pamphlet is only traditionally known, like many of its contemporary publications. No one now could dare to make them known. Bishop Heath states that even Dr. London did not approve of this last-mentioned production, and it must accordingly have deserved a more severe judgment than the Bishop's description—"unseasonable and lying." But did the inquisitors make out any part of their report from it? Of course they did. Almost every passage foreshadowed Lord Crumwell's inquisition, and in many instances supplied the verbiage of the reports which supplemented it. From the time that Simon Fish became what was then called a "lawyer," his career is described as "mean and dishonourable." He was a man of undoubted intellect; but of an intellect overcast with the worst of evil passions. To use a trite phrase, God seemed to have endowed him with talents, whilst Satan inspired their application. Finding religion incompatible with the indulgence of his desires, he abandoned it, and then traduced its professors, the most eminent of whom, when he found it safe or profitable, he defamed in vile language. He lampooned Richard Foxe, the good Bishop of Winchester, Fisher, and Archbishop Warham—men so eminent for their virtues—whilst he cautiously abstained from any contest with a kindred caitiff, Polydore Vergil—a more astute calumniator, who excelled him only in the choice of language. In Wolsey's time Fish took

part in a play produced for the purpose of ridiculing the Cardinal, and was banished the kingdom, but was subsequently recalled by the King, who considered him a "useful man" for the special time. If Fish had not left, as a bequest to the detestation of humanity, the indescribable malefactions of his pen, his real character might well be judged by the manner of men who formed his friends and patrons—Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, Lord Clinton, Thomas Crumwell, Thomas Audley, and Maister Rich. Maister Fish's career was suddenly brought to a close. He died of the plague, and his tongue swelled to such enormous dimensions that it "burst his mouth."*

Radcliffe states that the notorious Wakefield assisted Fish in the narrative of the "Jolly Monks Surprised." Leland considered Fish a "horrid and unprincipled man." Pomeroy describes him as a "bad Papist, who had no regard for honesty." Polydore Vergil believed him to have been "mean and treacherous"—in fact, very like Polydore himself, who, in his own person added ingratitude to the description. Dodd and later writers concur in opinion that "Fish was an infidel in religion and a rogue in worldly dealings." Yet this indescribable creature has obtained a niche in the genial pages of Foxe, who, with a power of blasphemy equal to the subject, sets down Fish as one of the "Valiant Souldiers of Christ." In early youth Simon Fish was educated and lodged by a monastic house; and in after-life he received numerous tokens of kindness from the monks; his gratitude for which is illustrated in his

* Mordaunt, his physician, describes his death-bed as one of despair and horror.

writings. How true is the remark of Macaulay, that "there is no malice like that of a renegade!"

If HENRY FITZROY had lived a few years longer, it is probable he would have been the cause of considerable trouble to the State. This youth was born at Blackmore, in Essex, and was the natural son of Henry VIII. by the beautiful Elizabeth Clara Blount, daughter of Sir John Blount, of Knevet, in Shropshire; she was the widow of Sir Gilbert Talboise, and received a large annuity from the Crown, besides jewels to a considerable amount. Young Fitzroy was educated in Paris, having for a companion Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, better known in after years as the "Poet Surrey." The King was marvellously fond of his son, and showered favours and honours upon him. When only six years old he was created Earl of Nottingham and Duke of Richmond. In a few years more he was appointed Lord-Lieutenant of all the country from the Trent northwards; next created a Knight of the Garter; and to connect him more closely with royalty, he was made Keeper of the City and Castle of Carlisle—an office held by the heir-apparent from the time of Richard the Second. His next appointment was that of Lord-Admiral of England, Wales, and Ireland. The old conservative Legitimists looked at these appointments with natural jealousy; the "lawyers prophesied something disastrous;" the question was whispered in many baronial halls—"Will the King venture on the daring experiment of creating Elizabeth Blount's boy Prince of Wales?" A large extent of confiscated lands was conferred upon this regal scion of the bar-sinister; splendid mansions and jewels were at his disposal, and lordly attendants were in his suite. Here, however, the King paused, and postponed

to a more opportune moment his favourite project of creating Henry Fitzroy Prince of Wales. At sixteen this youth was married to Lord Surrey's sister. On one occasion Archbishop Cranmer gave a banquet to the Duke of Richmond, which highly pleased the King; but in his servile homage Cranmer merely followed the example of Wolsey to this "pert boy." Shortly after his marriage the Duke of Richmond began to give indications that he was a thorough Tudor. He seemed to inherit the evil disposition of his father; was violent and unprincipled, a slave to dicing and immoral society; became the tool of Lord Crumwell, Audley, and Suffolk; joined the conspiracy for the overthrow of Anna Boleyn; was present at her trial; and again, as the reader is aware, attended her execution, where he demeaned himself with heartless levity.

Henry VIII. quartered his retainers pretty freely upon the public revenue and the confiscated lands. Walter Luke, a lawyer of little ability, became the Attorney-General to Henry Fitzroy, when the client was a child of six or seven. One of the principal recommendations this worthy possessed for office was derived from the fact that he became the "second husband" of the King's nurse, Anne Oxenbridge, on whom the profuse monarch bestowed one of the monastic estates in Bedfordshire. Walter Luke was subsequently promoted to a judgeship in the King's Bench; and at a later period he sat a silent commissioner on the trial of Fisher and More. He died in 1544.*

Young Henry Fitzroy died on the 22nd of July, 1536, without issue. He was seventeen years and eight months

* Camden, MSS.; Memoir of Henry Fitzroy; Foss's Judges of England, vol. v. pp. 189, 90.

old at the period of his death. "Harry Fitzroy," as he was contemptuously called by the old nobles, was very unpopular with the people, on account of his insolent bearing. The traditions of the Throckmorton family present a repellent picture of the Duke of Richmond's disposition. In the Throckmorton MSS. are to be seen some "special entries," which show what Henry Fitzroy was likely to become when a little older. Some writers, in the interest of the Reformation, claim this senseless youth "as a devoted friend to the 'new learning;'" but Henry Fitzroy, a petulant and insolent boy, is not much to boast of as the patron of any *cultus*; but in truth Fitzroy cared little for any party or creed. With such examples around him, with boundless means of gratifying every caprice, with no single virtue within sight, with no mental culture to humanise him, it was as well for England that nature could no longer sustain the excesses of a precocious profligate; so humanity was saved another exhibition in the son of the matured wickedness and cruelty of the father.

A few words as to Fitzroy's mother. Lord Herbert describes Elizabeth Blount as a woman of great learning and highly accomplished. And he adds:—"She was the most beautiful woman of her time; she outlived Henry's six wives." By the "King's command," she was married to his favourite, Lord Clinton, to whom I shall have occasion to refer anon. It is stated by Thornton, that for many years before her death she gave "up her whole time in doing good for the poor and succouring the unfortunate." "She was an obstinate Papist to the last," writes Pomeroy.—Anthony Delabarre, at the suggestion of his friend John Foxe, visited Lady Clinton on a spiritual mission, "begging

of her to shake off the dust of Popery from her sowl." Lady Clinton declined his spiritual aid. The words used by Delabarre were often spoken by John Jewell in his early sermons at St. Paul's Cross.

The name of Sir ANTHONY FITZHERBERT, a member of an old Derbyshire family, stands amongst the judges of Henry's reign. According to Anthony Wood, he was a scholar of Oxford, but Wood is unable to say of what college. The name does not appear amongst the lawyers till 1510. Fitzherbert was, however, employed long antecedent to that period in the composition of his laborious work, entitled "The Grand Abridgement," containing an abstract of the Year Books till his time, the first edition of which was published in 1514. In 1516, he was made one of the King's serjeants, and shortly after knighted. In 1522 he was created a judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He was one of the commissioners sent to Ireland, "where he arranged matters to the satisfaction of the King." During the Monastic Inquisition Fitzherbert was appointed a commissioner, but his report "was not approved of by Lord Crumwell," and he declined moving further in the inquiry. Cecilia Varney, the Abbess of Buckland, has drawn a striking contrast between Chief Justice Fitzherbert and Dean Layton as monastic visitors. Fitzherbert's signature is the last but one of the seventeen names attached to the articles of impeachment against Wolsey.* He was also one of the commissioners who presided at the trials of Fisher and More. Mr. Foss vindicates his memory against

* State Trials of Henry VIII's Reign; Hall's Chronicle; Pomeroy; Thorndale; Foss's Judges of England, vol. v.; Lord Campbell's Chancellors.

the charge of taking part in those iniquitous trials, by stating that every one knew he dared not adopt any other course without endangering his own life. Sir Thomas More stood forth alone amongst the lawyers of England as a fearless advocate of right. Notwithstanding the judicial crimes with which Fitzherbert was more or less connected as a judge, his reputation stood fair with his contemporaries. When uninfluenced by the menaces of the Crown, his judgments were equitable, and in criminal cases he was prone to incline to clemency—a sentiment almost unknown to the judges of Henry's reign. He was the author of some learned works, and his labours were not confined to professional inquiries, but extended to subjects of general interest, aiming at the instruction of his countrymen and the amelioration of their social condition. The last of his works was a book upon husbandry. "He was," says Father Radclyffe, "very charitable and mindful of the claims of God's poor upon the rich, and dispensed belly-cheer to all who came by his house in the countrie parts."

Sir Anthony Fitzherbert died May 27th, 1538. In his last moments he was greatly affected at the political and religious changes which were then going forward in England. Having called his children and other relatives to his bedside, he enjoined them by a solemn promise, *never to accept, or grant, or to make a purchase of any abbey lands*.^{*} Stratford, who knew Fitzherbert for a period of forty years, states that "he clung to the Old Church as closely as the ivy to the abbey walls." Father Stratford was a most worthy man. He was a member of the Reading community,

^{*} Foss's Judges of England, vol. vi. pp. 167, 168; Thorndale, Carlo Logario.

and was the author of a small black-letter book on the "Irish Abbeyes and Monks." Having fled from the persecutions in England, he died at Tours, in 1549, at the age of eighty-seven years.

Chief Justice FITZJAMES is described by Lord Campbell as "a recreant judge." He was one of the Royal Commissioners who sat with Audley at the trial of Fisher and More. On that occasion he is represented as sustaining the illegal actions of the Chancellor. Mr. Foss cannot concur in the severe judgment of Lord Campbell. Lord Campbell charges Fitzjames "with playing a cruel part towards Anna Boleyn at her trial."* But the judges were only present to act as legal assessors to the Peers, who, by the King's command, stood in the position of jurymen. Much of the proceedings have been preserved in the *Baga de Secretis*, and from this report it would appear that Fitzjames was *not* present at the trial of Anna Boleyn.

David Lloyd, who wrote about a century after the death of Fitzjames, represents him as a "marvellous good public man, who entertained a horror of any kind of fraud or corruption in officials of the State." The MS. (1523, J. 54) in the British Museum conveys a somewhat pleasing picture of John Fitzjames. "Two main principles," observes this now little-known writer, "guide human nature—Conscience and Law. By the former we are obliged in reference to another world; by the latter in relation to this. What was law always was then a resolution, neither to deny, nor defer, nor sell justice. When Maister Fitzjames's cousin urged for a favour, the judge saith, "Come to my house,

* State Trials of Henry's reign, vol. i. p. 418.

and I will deny thee nothing ; come to the King's court, and *I must do thee justice.* . . . Two things the judge upheld in these boisterous times: First, silence, second, patience. The grand article of his faith was, 'I believe as *the Church believes,*' and the great rule of his practice was, '*I will do as the law directs.*'"*

Fitzjames held the office of Lord Chief Justice of England for thirteen years. There is no doubt that he participated in the craven subserviency to the Royal tyranny with which every one of his judicial brethren was chargeable.† "It is not improbable," observes Mr. Foss, "that Chief Justice Fitzjames partook of those faults which pervaded the whole Bench at the period in which he flourished ; but they were the faults arising more from that awful dread of majesty which the Tudors inculcated than from any personal cruelty or delinquency." Fitzjames is represented by Lord Campbell as the early companion of Wolsey ; that the latter was his patron, and at a subsequent period he joined with the enemies of the Cardinal to effect his ruin. There is no evidence to sustain this statement of Lord Campbell.‡ Fitzjames is described by Dodd as "possessed of many good qualities ; remarkable for skill and integrity as a judge." Simon Fish wrote a lampoon upon the social habits of Chief Justice Fitzjames ; Pomfret, a contemporary lawyer, states that Fish's work was "gross and filthy," and John Bale dismisses it in a sentence—"In every way unworthy of a scholar and a man learned in the law." Fitzjames retired from the bench in 1539, and died three years subsequently.

* Lord Campbell's *English Chancellors*, vol. ii.

† Foss's *English Judges*, vol. v. p. 176.

‡ Ibid., p. 180.

His will gives unmistakable proofs of his attachment to the Catholic Church; his bequests to the poor of his native parish were numerous, thoughtful, and delicately expressed.

The reader has already seen what sort of man was JOHN LONDON, Dean of Wallingford, Lord Crumwell's chief monastic inquisitor, whom some writers in the Puritan interest describe as the "real Reformer—the man who cleared out the Popish rookeries." Few beings, however, of the time required reformation more than London himself. When the religious houses were dismantled, and their inhabitants dispersed, he was employed against the Reformers under the Six Articles. In this new office he acted with falsehood and cruelty, and was even committed for perjury to the Fleet in 1543. Immured in one of those dungeons where so many of his victims had perished of prison fever, he had ample time for reflection. Here, it is said, he became a prey to remorse and despair, until his evil life ended amidst universal hatred and execration. Like his employer, Lord Crumwell, London had no party to sustain him in his hour of need. Even such characters as Pomfret and Bale looked upon him as the "very incarnation of wickedness." His body was privately conveyed from the prison, for the populace desired to make a *bonfire* of it. His death caused rejoicing amongst the poor, whose benefactors he so flagitiously participated in bringing to ruin. Let it be remembered that it was upon the report of this infamous man—of course, well supplemented—that the Protestants of this country have had to form their opinions of the character of the monastic houses. The letters of the Abbess of Godstowe place the reputation of Dr. London in its true light. His conduct to the nuns of Shaftesbury was that of a coarse-

minded ruffian. Cecilia Varney, of Buckland Convent, made heroic resistance to the King's Inquisitors. Thorndale describes her as "young, beautiful, and pious; the friend of the poor and the houseless." I have previously stated that Dean Layton, the colleague of London, when on his death-bed was visited by Sir William Paget, who confirms the statement of others, to the effect that Layton was "in a most unsettled state of conscience, fearing death very much." Griffin relates that Layton informed him his life was that of "a profligate;" and worse still, he had slandered the character of women whose lives were "remarkable for holiness." Thorndale, who was also well acquainted with Layton, saw him two hours before his death, when he addressed him in these words:—"Beware of my fate—you now see the death-bed of a bad priest; I served my King truly, but not my God." *All is lost*, were his last words. Pomeroy observes, "Whether it be accounted a Popish superstition or a falsehood, I have it from a right trusty man of the Gospel, that some horrible things occurred to bring shame on the inside life of the King's Commissioner, which the Abbess of Shaftesbury, and that good woman Cecilia Varney, of Buckland, foretold. It appeareth strange, but it is most true. It is known to divers men of the Gospel way of thinking, that several of Dr. London's agents died in an unsettled state of mind. It was bruited in the countrie parts that London and Layton left written confessions, with a request that these confessions should be made public; but it is probable that their friends, or the King's Council, would destroy such documents wherever they could obtain them."* Fuller, and in our own

* John Pomeroy's Letters to Bishop Barlow; *Changed Tymes*.

days, Dean Hook, have related some accounts of confessions made by Crumwell's monastic agents; but they were invariably "hushed up" in Henry's reign. Some of these repentant confessions may yet be discovered amongst the vast masses of MSS. unexamined in the public offices.

Macaulay describes the eccentric Duke of Shrewsbury, of 1688, as the "petted child of fortune." But the title might be more appropriately conferred on CHARLES BRANDON, who, from being the son of a needy knight, became, through Royal favour, Duke of Suffolk and the possessor of large estates. It is affirmed that he was ever willing to come forward to help to crush any victim the King desired to sacrifice.* Charles Brandon has hitherto been represented and accepted as one of the "most amiable and excellent personages connected with the King's Court." Comparatively speaking, he may have been, for good qualities were sadly rare about the person of King Henry. Recent researches have discovered the Duke of Suffolk to be, as Dr. Brewer describes him, "mean, ignorant, avaricious, and deceitful." Leland, the antiquary, who was a contemporary of Suffolk, and well acquainted with him, also affirms that he was "ignorant and very irreligious, immoral and drunken." Suffolk incited the King "to do many mean actions," writes Thomas Wyatt. "He had no regard for his word of honour, and was notorious for making false statements," observes Pomeroy. The research of Mr. Hepworth Dixon leads to the express conclusion that few about the Court liked him. Suffolk had a fine-looking portly person, and was of some repute as a soldier. A contemporary described him as "something like the show man of tournaments." Yet, as

* Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. ii.

a man of any repute, it is enough to say in his condemnation that Henry VIII. deemed him worthy of his friendship. Mr. Froude designates him, "the Wellington of the sixteenth century." Preposterous! First, all the struggles of the epoch would not, if combined, come up to the height of one of the Duke of Wellington's achievements. Second, by far the most important battle fought in Henry's reign was that of Flodden, at which the complete and signal victory was won by Howard, the brave and chivalrous Earl of Surrey.

Suffolk was the largest participator in the confiscation of the monastic lands. The Rev. J. H. Blunt represents him as a "friend to the Reformers," and then briefly describes his personal demerits and the amount of property he obtained through Crumwell's inquisition:—"The most astonishing of all the appropriations was made to the King's brother-in-law and *brother in profligacy*, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. This man, whose life was one scene of shameless living, became the proprietor of no fewer than thirty monasteries, chiefly in Lincolnshire and Warwickshire." The same author's opinion of the "newly-installed landowners" is worthy of the consideration of those who have read so many tales of the "lazy worthless monks." "If the new proprietors," Mr. Blunt observes, "had endeavoured to promote in any degree the religious objects for which they (the monasteries) had originally been intended, some excuse might have been offered for them, and their good deeds would have stood, perhaps, in the light of a condonation for what, if it was not sacrilege, was the very nearest approach possible to that crime. But no good deeds are to be told of these men. They briefly tried to build for themselves fine houses out of the property once dedicated to

God's service ; and if God's service was neglected anywhere, it was upon the estates thus acquired. The original grantees of the lands seldom, indeed, prospered, and their estates either passed into other families or to distant branches of their own. Crumwell's property was wasted by his son, and Suffolk's last heirs did not long survive himself."*

Suffolk was ungrateful and treacherous to Wolsey—in fact, he evinced the same evil qualities to all who ever served him, if he at all deemed that his own interests might be forwarded by their misfortunes or their downfall. His letters, still extant, prove him to have been uneducated ; but he was learned enough in dissipation to constitute him a meet companion for Henry in his private orgies with the Seymours, the Clintons, and the Bryans. Perhaps the most noteworthy incident in Suffolk's public career was the acquisition of his vast property.

According to an ancient custom, which was enforced by Edward III., and to which the Pope agreed, it was "lawful for the descendants of families who founded religious houses to claim the said property, if it were in future time applied to any other purpose apart from religion and charity."† There were at this time very few of the descendants of such donors living. And it would have been a hazardous experiment to call the King's attention to this ancient custom. Nevertheless, there were persons possessed of sufficient courage to write to Crumwell, claiming some particular portion of the lands given to the Duke of Suffolk. Of course, these appeals were made in vain, and the appellants

* Blunt's *Reformation of the Church of England*, vol. i. p. 379.

† Rymer, vol. iii. p. 132 ; Fuller's *Church Hist.*, vol. i.

lants might have deemed themselves fortunate to have met with only a denial of their claims.

The "alienableness" of Church property was not recognised by any statute or order of the Mediæval Church. On their election the heads of monastic and capitular bodies took a solemn oath never to alienate, or be a party to the alienation of, any portion of the lands or goods of which they were made the trustees. The Council of Carthage (A.D. 398) prohibited the alienation of Church lands or goods, except with the full consent of the bishops of the places concerned. Subsequent Councils made the obligation far more stringent. For many ages the most despotic and unprincipled kings respected those ancient statutes.

To return to Suffolk's early career. At twenty-eight he was a veteran in "affairs of love," as such matters are unfitly characterised. He had already deserted a first wife, Anne Browne, and married a second, Blanche Mortimer; divorced, by some process, this second wife, and, "in a fit of penitence, *re-married his first wife*, Anne Browne; espoused a third woman, in the instance of Elizabeth Gray, sole heiress of Viscount Lisle and Lady Muriel Howard, sister of Lady Elizabeth Boleyn; received, on account of Elizabeth Gray, the dignity left vacant by her father; and deserted this third wife in favour of a lady of more exalted position. He seemed to have his choice of royal and imperial wives.* Mary Tudor, King Henry's sister, at this time carried on a clandestine courtship with him; and Marguerite of Austria was inclined to listen to his addresses. Which bride should he take? Mary, the idol of his early dreams, was the daughter of a

* History of Two Queens, vol. iii.

deceased king, and the sister of a powerful living monarch; but then Marguerite was the daughter of an Emperor with semi-independent rule. Even while he was whispering love to Mary Tudor he had turned, as it were, from her bright eyes to scan the charms of the maturer Marguerite. The imperial Lady of Austria had, however, married Don Juan in the very year the Princess Mary was born. Her second husband, Philiberto of Savoy, had been dead ten years; yet Charles Brandon felt no shame in leaving Lady Lisle, his last nominal wife, and the Princess Mary, in whose heart he had a place, and venturing to address the Archduchess, who had known him in the French campaign as Viscount Lisle—an unpleasant fact, considering that he had a 'Lady Lisle' in England; but his ducal name of Suffolk, with its honours, might help to smooth his path; for the rest he trusted to a handsome face, a splendid figure, and a gorgeous suit of mail.*

It is stated that King Henry amused himself highly by promoting a love-making scene between Suffolk and the Duchess of Savoy, when they met at Lisle. Henry acted as interpreter, and greatly delighted in the blunders the Duchess made in *English*. There is still extant a curious account of this courtship.†

The intrigues connected with Suffolk's match-making was soon at an end. The Archduchess Marguerite sent De Pleine to England to reconnoitre; he was to bring "a clear account" of the Princess Mary. De Pleine writes to his Imperial Mistress—"The Princess has the loveliest eyes I

* Hepworth Dixon's *Two Queens*, vol. iii. p. 178-9.

† *Chronicle of Calais*; Camden Society.

ever saw; she is very graceful in her mien, dances and plays so well and is sportive in her ways, that had you ever seen her you would not rest till she was with you. She is short and girl-like, looking some years younger than her actual age."

As the reader is aware Suffolk lost the Imperial Widow, and the Princess Mary became the wife of Louis, King of France, and in a few weeks subsequent was a widow;* and next—the bride of undeserving Suffolk.

The Duke of Suffolk's mode of living was most profuse, and notwithstanding the enormous grants he received from the Crown, he was still heavily in debt.

Mary, the Queen-Duchess of Suffolk, was the life of the English Court for many years. She was regarded as the beauty of the Courts of France and England at the meeting of the "Cloth of Gold."† Mary continued to visit the English Court till the extravagance of her husband compelled her to retire to her country residence; still, she continued the sympathising friend of Queen Katharine, whilst Suffolk was the constant companion of the King's revelry with his associates, Sir Francis Bryan, Lord Clinton, and Maister Blagge. The Queen-Duchess, although neglected by the husband who professed so much love for her at one time, felt (about 1524) a more bitter pang when it was reported to her "that one or other of Suffolk's former wives claimed him sometime before the birth of her last child, on which account it was alleged that the partisans of the claims of that lady's children loudly affirmed that they were the only legitimate heirs of Suffolk; that Suffolk had, in his early

* The early and most interesting part of the history of Mary Tudor occurs in the first volume of this work.

† Hall's Chronicle; Lord Herbert's Life of Henry VIII.

youth, two wives, and one betrothed spouse alive at the same time." These reports were but too well founded. It was not till 1529 that the claim of Blanche Mortimer on the hand of Suffolk was finally invalidated, and his marriage with the Princess Mary declared valid by Wolsey.* Those who were well acquainted with Suffolk's character were of opinion that four or five women whom he had married laid claim to him as husband. His profligacy in his native county was noted far and near. It was said that he was following in the track of his grandfather, Sir William Brandon, whom Edward the Fourth "denounced for his immoral course of life."† The grandsire must have been almost an equal in wickedness to his grandson when the progenitor succeeded in shocking the proprieties of the Fourth Edward.

In 1527 the Queen-Duchess lost her only son by the sweating sickness. The loss of her boy deprived Mary of all enjoyment for the remainder of her life. She seldom visited her brother's Court; and her sympathies with Queen Katharine were out-spoken with fearless kindliness. The Princess also, on every occasion, showed herself to be an uncompromising adherent of the olden faith of Christendom. The Queen-Duchess likewise expressed her indignation at the conduct of her former maid of honour, Anna Boleyn.

Mary's husband was involved in all the discreditable proceedings of the King and his courtiers, whilst she was lovingly regarded in the remote districts of East Anglia as a benefactress of the people. "Her name," writes her dis-

* State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

† The grandfather was killed at the battle of Bosworth Field (see Paston Papers.)

tinguished biographer, "is to this time (1868) remembered in Suffolk, through her exertions in the encouragement of the Abbot's great fair, held at Bury St. Edmunds. She came every year with her queenly retinue in State from Westhorpe Hall to be present at this celebrated fair, and gave receptions in a magnificent tent to the county ladies who came to make purchases. In the evening the Queen-Duchess presided at a ball. On the following day she entertained a number of rustic dames and their daughters, and freely conversed with them upon the style in which yeomen's wives lived and the conduct of their husbands. For generations the traditions of the Suffolk peasantry retained grateful memories of the numberless kind actions of the 'good Lady Mary,' as the people styled her."

Henry VIII., with characteristic consideration, invited his sister to the coronation of Anna Boleyn; but the proud daughter of "Elizabeth the Good" spurned the invitation, and then wrote a letter to her sister-in-law, Queen Katharine, full of affectionate condolence.

The Duke of Suffolk attended the coronation, and was the constant companion of the King for the remainder of his life.

On the 25th of June, 1533, this amiable and good Princess expired at her country-seat in Suffolk. Whilst the thoughtless citizens of London were engaged in the continued festivities for the coronation of Anna Boleyn, the good and grateful inhabitants of Suffolk were lamenting their benefactress. An immense concourse of people attended the Princess's funeral at the Abbey of Bury St. Edmunds. The ladies from the surrounding counties appeared on horseback, and some three thousand women of the humbler ranks in life were also present, "lamenting their great loss."

A stately monument, elaborately ornamented, was raised to the memory of this good and gentle princess. Scarcely, however, was it completed when it shared the destruction to which King Henry doomed the glorious structure in which his once beloved sister Mary was interred.* The people of Bury removed the coffin into a neighbouring church to save from the desecration of Lord Crumwell's agents the remains of a princess who had been so many years a Sister of Charity to the inhabitants of Suffolk. A marble tablet with a modern inscription is *now* placed by the wall at the head of the tomb, which at present stands at the right side of the altar of St. Mary's Church at Bury,† but that was not its original station.

The corpse of the princess was subject to a second disinterment in 1734, when the tomb was pulled down. The body was enclosed in a leaden case somewhat resembling the human form. The remains were then in a wonderful state of preservation, a profusion of long fair hair glittering like gold was spread over it; of this a handful was cut off by Sir John Cullum. Several antiquarians present at the exhumation of the remains of the Queen-Duchess likewise possessed themselves of part of this abundant *chevelure*, which had so long resisted all the decaying forces of the tomb. Little did Mary, the amiable and lovely Queen-Duchess, and her young and lively maidens think, when these far-famed tresses of burnished gold were combed out and braided at her bridal toilet with pride and care, that a day would come

* *Lives of the Tudor Princesses*, by Agnes Strickland.

† *Topography of St. Edmund's Bury Abbey*.

when they would be profaned by the rude grasp of ungenerous strangers, and even subjected to the hammer of modern auctioneers.

"In the beginning of the present century" writes Miss Strickland, "a lock of this beautiful Queen's hair was advertised, lotted, and puffed in the catalogue of the household furniture of a deceased antiquary who had taken it from her tomb."

The ill-fate of the line of Stuart was fully rivalled by that of the sister-stem descended from Mary Tudor of the "White and Red Rose."

Suffolk had two sons by his last marriage with Lady Willoughby, both of whom died of the sweating sickness in Edward VI.'s reign. This lady made an ostentatious parade of her Protestantism; she was popular with the extreme Reformers. It was bruited that she was Suffolk's sixth wife. This Duchess of Suffolk was an implacable enemy to Dr. Gardyner, and on one occasion dressed a dog in a *rochet*, and called it "Bishop Gardyner." Holinshed relates some passages at arms between Gardyner and the Duchess, who was styled the "witty Kate Brandon." She was a coarse-minded masculine woman, and like the ladies of rank in those times, much given to swearing.

In 1546 the Duke of Suffolk died, after having escaped the "storms of the Court, from the days of Wolsey." He was sustained in those evil times neither by honesty nor ability. He remained the same profligate, the same dissembler, the same heartless courtier, the same scoffer at religion up to the hour of his sudden death. The reader may fairly judge his reputation from the character of the men with whom he had been so long associated. Hume's eulogies on public

men are justly liable to suspicion. "Cranmer lost this year," says Hume, "the most sincere and powerful friend whom he possessed at Court—Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk."* Suffolk learned much from Cranmer, who taught him the arts by which he himself became a master of dissimulation. Learned and "observant of men and matters" as Henry undoubtedly was, he was ever deceived in his estimate of those surrounding his person, an accurate knowledge of whom would so much have benefited him. The long friendship he manifested for Suffolk and Cranmer is a proof of this. He expressed his sorrow for the loss of Suffolk, and declared that during the whole course of their "correspondence, his brother-in-law had not made any attempt to injure an adversary; had never whispered a word to the disadvantage of anyone." Then, addressing his Council, he continued—"Is there any amongst you, my lords, that can say as much?" According to Edward Hall, when the King finished these words, "he looked round in all the faces of the Council, and saw that confusion which the consciousness of mighty guilt naturally placed upon the faces of men whom his Highness thought to be honest." May not astonishment have been a more suitable word for Hall to use than "confusion"? Doubtless the Council marvelled at Henry's estimate of Suffolk, and were "confounded" that so bad a man could be so eulogised. Henry was indeed much deceived as to the real character of his kinsman. The King said that Suffolk never complained of, or accused a man; but the Duke of Suffolk had little need to ask the

* Hume, vol. iii. (folio) p. 272.

King to right *his* wrongs; he had a "following" ready and able to settle such affairs with any one who had the temerity to excite the hatred of Charles Brandon. And again, old soldiers of that epoch were not much given to "make complaints" of their enemies. They proceeded in a more direct fashion.

In Brewer's State Papers, vol. ii. (preface xv-xvi.), the Duke of Suffolk's early career is narrated at some length. In 1528 he appeared in a most discreditable divorce case, which was not made public, although the record of the proceedings were duly entered and are still extant. According to the record of the divorce Suffolk was "engaged, or contracted," to be married to a lady named Anne Brown, whom he rejected for some reasons of his own; he next solemnly joined in wedlock Margaret Mortimer, who was *his own aunt*. He lived in London and other places with this woman as his wife, and after a time, it is alleged, his "conscience" prompted him to seek a divorce, which was readily granted, at Orvieto, in May, 1528.

With what feelings of indignation Mary Tudor must have read such a decree in favour of the licentious being who had deceived her and so many others! Those writers who have put forward Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk, as one of Dr. Cranmer's agents for reforming the religion of England would do well to study the moral character of their unconscious apostle.

Another associate in Henry's licentiousness was Lord Clinton, who married young Fitzroy's mother. As dowry with this consignment, Clinton received from the King the lands and other property of *thirteen abbeys and convents*. In the reign of Edward VI. Lord Clinton received further

grants, amongst which were Barking and Crowland.* At this time Clinton openly sustained the Reformation; but in Mary's reign he was a *Papist again*. Upon the accession of Elizabeth, Lord Clinton, like Sir William Cecil, "saw the error of his way" and was once more a Reformer. This versatile "noble" was finally created Earl of Nottingham, and increased in wealth. Clinton, as to personal character, has been set down by general authority to have been a "dicer and a man of odious morals," but Anthony Delebarre considered him "a God-fearing man."

Henry VIII. had many other convivial companions. Sir Francis Bryan, is represented by his contemporaries as "*the* man who corrupted King Henry;" but this accusation might more justly be laid to the account of Charles, Duke of Suffolk and Lord Clinton—that is, if any one could corrupt a being with such passions as Henry. Bryan was engaged as a divorce agent at Rome, where he employed himself in forging letters and falsifying reports. He has been also charged with stealing from a cabinet a correspondence of Wolsey with Clement VII., and "placing Wolsey's letters in his royal master's possession." Many circumstances raise doubts as to the accuracy of these statements, for the Pontiff was remarkable for the care and caution he used in securing his foreign correspondence. Sir Francis Bryan, however, was capable of committing such an act of larcenous dishonour if he had the opportunity. In London he was known as a "dicer and a profligate." He appeared to some advantage in the masks and theatrical entertainments of the King; was the associate

* Records of the Monastic Confiscations.

of Suffolk and Clinton in their night revels and visits to *Bankside*.* He had the tact to adapt himself to whatever the Court required, whether masking, dicing, or discreditable conversation at the King's "private merrie meetings in a certain house at Westminster." In a tilting match at Greenwich he lost his right eye. This incident won for him the sympathy of the King. The only virtue he seemed to possess was courage—his greatest talent that of being a clever practical soldier. At the battle of *Musselburgh* (1547) he commanded with skill and valour, and had the reputation of being humane to the wounded enemy, and kind to his own soldiers. He was esteemed a good Latin and Spanish scholar, and was the author of some songs and sonnets. His politics and religion were those of the Court "for the time being."

* *Ponieroy's Chronicle*; *Wyatt and Cobham's Correspondence*.

CHAPTER XI.

HENRY'S INTENTIONS EXCEEDED.

MANY countries have changed their government—few their religion; but how many disturbances and how much bloodshed has not the latter change involved! It filled Germany with civil strife, and raised myriads of revolutionary sectaries who agreed in nothing but turmoils, fanaticism and violence. And it surely has not been without its disturbing elements in England. It produced the Puritans, and they certainly were the founders of revolutionary movements, so antagonistic to the monarchical institutions so beloved of old by the people of Britain. Some writers have noticed the fact that the “*Roi galant-homme*,” Francis the First—whose assistant spouses were not so ambitious nor so fastidious as Anna Boleyn in the matter of marriage—complained once to the Papal Nuncio then in Paris, and menaced imitation of Henry’s secession. “No, sire,” said the Nuncio, “you would be the first to repent it; the spreading of a new religion amongst the common people is soon attended with a revolution in government.” Again, Admiral de Coligny happening to converse with the celebrated Strozzi about the new doctrine, the latter assured the Admiral that “if the King wants to destroy the monarchy he cannot take a better way than to change the religion of

the country." In one of his sermons the well-known Huguenot preacher, M. d'Aillé, remarked that "never was there a new religion promulgated but a great many prophets started up who followed one another in propagating their reveries." "To change the religion of a country," says David Hume, "even when seconded by a party, is one of the most perilous enterprises which any sovereign can attempt, and often proves the most destructive to royal authority." This state of facts Henry himself realized. The conduct of the Anabaptists in Germany and the Netherlands is a striking illustration of this.* When the storm of passion had passed away, Henry calmly and apprehensively weighed the responsibility he had incurred. In becoming the Head of a Church he had not reckoned the cost, and his will was, for too long a time, the order of observance. Being discontented himself he had revolted, and his arrogance, not his belief, founded a new Spiritual Kingdom. He forgot the principles of government, if he ever intended to establish new observances for the novel condition of affairs, and so those outside of his immediate influence adopted their own ordinances—one God the worshipped of a myriad formulæ. The King too soon realised that the indiscriminate reading of the Scriptures did not tend to make certain classes more loyal to the monarch or obedient to the law. In 1541 Henry made a discovery that even the authorised version of the Scriptures was disfigured by unfaithful renderings and contaminated with notes calculated to mislead the ignorant and unwary; that the indiscriminate perusal of the Sacred tomes had not only generated

* See Leopold Ranke on the Anabaptist Movement in Germany, vol. iii.

a race of teachers who promulgated doctrines the most strange and contradictory, but had taught ignorant men to discuss the meaning of the inspired writings in alehouses and taverns, till heated with controversy and liquor, they burst into injurious language, and provoked each other to breaches of the peace. To remedy the first of these evils it was enacted that the version of Tyndale should be disused altogether as "crafty, false, and untrue," and that the authorised translation should be published without note or comment; to obviate the second, the permission of reading the Bible to others in public was revoked; that of reading it to private families was confined to persons of the rank of lords, or gentlemen, and that of reading it personally and in secret was granted to men who were householders, and to females of noble or gentle birth. Any other—woman, or any artificer, apprentice, journeyman, servant, or labourer who should presume to open the Sacred volume, was made liable for each offence to one month's imprisonment.* The King had already issued a proclamation forbidding the possession of Tyndale's or Coverdale's versions, or of any book or manuscript containing matter contrary to the doctrine set forth by authority of Parliament, ordaining all such books to be given up before the last day of August, that they might be burnt by order of the sheriff or the bishop, and prohibiting the importation "of any manner of Englishe booke concerning any matter of Christien religione, from parts beyond the sea."†

* Statute 34, 1 Henry VIII.

† Chron. Catal. 228. The persons whose writings are condemned by name are Frythe, Tyndale, Wicliffe, Joye, Roye, Basyle, Beale, Barnes, Coverdale, Tournour, and Tracey. Several of these Reformers were the friends of Dr.

It was not, however, the Royal theologian's intention to leave the flock of whom he made himself the Chief Shepherd, without, as authoritatively stated, "a supply of spiritual food." On a former occasion Lord Crumwell had announced the appointment of two committees of prelates and theologians to compose a new code of doctrine and ceremonies. Certain questions had been proposed to each person separately, and their answers were collected and laid before the King.* To make this new work as perfect as was possible three years were employed. It was at last published under the title of "A Necessary Doctrine and Erudition for any Christened Man;" and to distinguish it from the "The Institution," the former exposition of the same subject, it was called "The King's Book." It is more full, but teaches the same doctrines, with the addition of "*Transubstantiation and the Sufficiency of Communion under one Kind.*" The new creed, as some termed it, was approved by both Houses of Convocation.† All writings or books in opposition to it were prohibited, and Archbishop Cranmer ordered it to be published.‡

Dr. Brewer has thrown a flood of light upon the Royal Supremacy, and its concealed surroundings, which prove that the learned Henry was lamentably deceived by his theological guide, Thomas Cranmer.

Dean Hook and Mr. Froude stand on nearly opposite grounds. The Dean avers that the Liturgy of the present

Cranmer, and he was the leading spirit who condemned their writings, just because the king would have it so.

* Of these answers some have been published, others are to be found in the British Museum (Cleop. C. 5).

† Wilkins, *Con.* iii. 868.

‡ *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vi.

day was revised and approved by the Council of Charles the Second, in 1662—the year of the Nonconformist extrusion. Mr. Froude claims the merit of its formation for Cranmer, whilst “its origin was Popish.” Mr. Froude says :—
“The Liturgy having been composed at a period when old and new beliefs were contending for supremacy, it contains some remnants of opinions which *have no longer perhaps a place in our convictions* ; but the more arduous problems of speculation are concealed behind a purposed vagueness which shrinks from definition ; and the spirit of the Prayer Book is the spirit of piety more than of theology, of wisdom more than of dogma.” And again, he remarks :—“As the translation of the Bible bears upon it the imprint of the mind of Tyndale, so, while the Church of England remains, *the image of Cranmer will be seen reflected on the calm surface of the Liturgy*. The most beautiful portions of it are *translations* from the Roman Breviary ; yet the same pages translated by others would not be those which chime like church bells in the ears of the English child.”* A few pages further on the same author finds fault with the “Thirty Nine Articles.” “These (the Articles) have survived, and, like other things in this country, have survived their utility and the causes which gave them birth.” Now, as the Articles were written to support the Liturgy, if the former have outlived their use, is not the deduction palpable that the latter is not regarded by Mr. Froude as of any particular value ?

Mr. Froude dwells on the changes and inconsistencies which marked the formation of the Prayer Book :—“Of the

* Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 391-2.

strange features of the change (he observes) the strangest was, perhaps, that the official opinion of Convocation was scarcely asked, even in form. *Parliament discussed the faith of England, and laymen decided on the doctrines which the clergy were compelled to teach.** Even Mr. Froude cannot help remarking the anomaly of laymen—for whose behoof, one should think, prayers are fashioned by men consecrated for the purpose—superseding the clergy, and compelling the latter to teach “laymen-made doctrines.” Wondrous incongruity!

In the formation of the Liturgy Mr. Froude admits that Cranmer collected the opinions of Continental Reformers. He brought over Peter Martyr, and others, less noted, to assist him. Of the fitness and merits of these men it is unnecessary to treat. Even their most partisan biographers more than sufficiently pronounce against them. Recently-discovered State MSS. prove that Bishop Poynt had a very considerable share in the preparation of the Prayer Book, and it is important now to know that Cranmer had, to direct his labours, a document written many years before by no less a man than Thomas Cromwell. This was a scheme for a new Liturgy far more “Popish” than any subsequently agreed on, though many of its suggestions were in part adopted.†

Burnet and Strype are of opinion that Cranmer “was dissatisfied with the Prayer Book he himself had prepared.” This statement appears probable, for, judging from the different parties with whom he held counsel on the subject, he had a conflict with himself.

* Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 142.

† State Papers (Domestic), Henry VIII.'s reign.

Bullinger alleges that the "good Archbishop had to contend with wicked clergy;" and the "Convocation had also given him much opposition." It appears, however, that the "wicked clergy," with few exceptions, sided with Cranmer himself; and as to the "Convocation," they became very pliable as a body, and those who possessed either the courage or the honesty to repel the innovations of Cranmer were soon lodged in the Fleet or the Tower. So much for Bullinger's "facts." Dean Hook frequently states that "Cranmer was never a Protestant in the present acceptation of the term, and perhaps never would be." Mr. Froude, making a metaphorical mirror of the "new learning" book of belief, described Cranmer's image as being reflected on the "calm surface of the Liturgy." Who shall decide when doctors disagree?

On the Christmas Eve of 1545 the King made his last speech to Parliament, a report of which is perhaps the most remarkable document extant of his reign. The Lord Chancellor was about, as usual, to address the Peers in the King's name, when Henry arose, and in a grave but very kindly mood intimated his desire to speak some words. He was feeble in body, but his voice thrilled through every heart in the hushed assembly.

"I am very sorry," said the King, "to know, and to hear how unreverently that precious jewel, the Word of God, is disputed, rhymed, sung, and jingled *in every alehouse and tavern*. This kind of man is depraved, and that kind of man; this ceremony and that ceremony. Of this I am sure, that charity was never so faint among you; and God himself, amongst Christians, was never less revered, honoured, and served. Therefore, as I said before, be in charity one with another, like brother and brother. Have

respect to the pleasing of God, and then I doubt not that the love I spoke of shall never be dissolved betwixt us.”*

Hall gives a long account of the King's speech. Another version of it is to be found in a letter of Sir John Mason to Paget.† Both agree in the main facts. Hall is supposed to have been present, for he describes with great particularity the King's appearance, voice, gestures, &c.; and there seems no doubt that the monarch's words have been accurately transmitted.

The King, according to Hall, “partly blames the priests for the bitter religious feeling pervading society, some of whom, he said, were so stiff in their old *mumpsimus*, and others so busy with their *sumpsimus*, that instead of preaching the Word of God, they were employed in railing at each other, and partly by the fact of the laity, whose delight it was to censure the proceedings of their bishops, priests and preachers.”‡

After thanking the Parliament for their devotion to his person and the liberality with which they granted the “subsidies,” the King adverted to the “interest he took in the poor; that it was his intention to serve God faithfully, and to provide for the wants of the poor.” And then, with an air of solemnity he paused for a moment, and a “flood of tears rolled down his face.” The “assembly became astonished—some cried and others murmured.” The King resumed—“He called on them, in the name of

* In Dr. Taylor's *Liberty of Prophesying*, sec. iv., the reader will find an interesting passage from that learned divine, on the “difficulty” of expounding the Scriptures.

† State Papers of Henry's reign.

‡ The Spanish Ambassador corroborates the statement of Hall.

God, and for the honour of God Almighty, to assist him." "I hear," said he, "that the special foundation of our religion being charity between man and man, it is so refrigerate as there was never more dissension and lack of love between man and man, the occasions whereof are opinions only, and names devised for the continuance of the same. Some are called Papists, some Lutherans, and some Anabaptists—names devised of the devil, and yet not fully without ground, for the severing of one man's heart, by conceit of opinion, from the other. For the remedy whereof I desire—first, every man of himself to travail for his own amendment. Secondly, I exhort the bishops and clergy, who are noted to be the salt and lamps of the world, by amending of their divisions to give example to the rest and to agree especially in their teaching—which, seeing there is but *one truth and verity*, they may easily do, calling therein for the aid of God. Finally, I exhort the nobles and the laity not to receive the grace of God in vain; and albeit, by the instinct of the Lord God, the Scriptures have been permitted unto them in the English tongue; yet *not to take upon them the judgment and exposition of the same*, but reverently and humbly, with fear and dread, to receive and use the knowledge which it hath pleased God to show unto them, and in any doubt to resort unto the learned, or at best the higher powers."

This deprecation of division, on the part of Henry, unavoidably reminds one of the proverb anent a certain personage rebuking sin. "Might not the dissidents weary of the bitter strife," ask, with justice, the moribund and now apprehensive monarch, "Was it not thou, O King, who

first rent the veil of the temple?" In Mr. Froude's panegyric of Henry, he remarks as to the monarch's death : "*He ended by accepting, and approving what he had commenced with persecuting.*" Henry never denied any of the doctrines of the Catholic Church. He rebelled against that Church because it would not grant him a divorce, but he never discarded or denounced its dogmata. For his profuse expenses and necessities he plundered the religious houses, without denying the religion for whose good and benevolent purposes those houses had been founded. He burned Reformers as heretics; and, if he hanged Papists for denying his supremacy, he acted on his arrogant privileges merely, and not from any change in his faith. Henry was indirectly the founder of Protestantism in England. Let the reader remember that he declared himself, *under the advice of Dr. Cranmer, to be the supreme Head of Christ's Church on earth.* He took on himself the spiritual government of the country as well as the temporal. In this course venal and servile Parliaments passed statutes approving of the King's spiritual Headship. The *spiritual power* assumed by the sacrilegious Henry was confirmed by blood, massacre, and plunder. The Bishop of Lincoln, in writing about the Ritualist section of the Anglican Church early in the year 1877, states that "*the Queen's Majesty is acknowledged by the Church of England to be the Supreme Head, under God, over all persons, spiritual as well as temporal, and in all causes, ecclesiastical as well as civil.*" This is just the title Cranmer suggested, and Henry adopted.

A most esteemed friend, of Magdalen College, Oxford, has directed my attention to a passage in contemporary history, —whose honoured author's burial in Westminster Abbey I

witnessed on a day when truth and genius mourned the burial of the brilliant essayist, the gifted poet, and the honourable historian—Lord Macaulay. This independent writer has thus indited of Henry the Eighth, his children, and his surroundings:—"A king whose character may be best described by saying that he was despotism itself personified; unprincipled ministers, a rapacious aristocracy, a servile Parliament—such were the instruments by which England was delivered from the yoke of Rome. The work which had been begun by Henry—the murderer of his wives—was continued by Somerset, the murderer of his own brother, and completed by Elizabeth, the murderer of her guest." Sir James Macintosh, also, regards with horror the domestic and political career of Henry Tudor, whom a distinguished writer of our present day describes as "gentle, amiable, and God-fearing."

Sir James Mackintosh writes:—"In the divorce of his inoffensive wife, the disregard of honour, of gratitude, of the ties of long union; of the sentiments which grow out of the common habitudes of domestic union, which restrain the greater number of imperfect husbands from open outrage, threw a deeper stain over the period employed in negotiating and effecting that unjustifiable and unmanly separation of Henry from his most worthy wife The execution of Sir Thomas More marks the moment of the transition of Henry's government from joviality and parade to a species of atrocity which distinguishes it from, and perhaps above, any other European tyranny. Henry Tudor is the only prince of modern times who carried judicial murder into his own bed, and imbrued

his hands in the blood of those whom he had once caressed.*

The King made no sign of reconciliation with the Head of that Church to whose sacramental rites he had recourse during his last illness. In his remarkable will, which involves singular contradictions, he styles himself—"and on earth, *immediately under God*, Supreme Head of the Church of England and of Ireland." This was setting down in words the inspiration of Cranmer. In another passage he orders Masses to be offered daily for his "soul's health *while the world will endure*." And again he proclaims his devotion to "the Mother of God," and "craves her intercession on his behalf." Here we witness a conflict between pride and conscience—a haughty assumption and a remorseful acknowledgment—both elements mutually destructive, and ineffectual for honest contrition..

It is stated by Sander, and quoted by Collier and other writers, that a few months before his death the King was inclined to become reconciled to the See of Rome; that he "told some bishops of the state of his mind, and asked their advice as to what he should do." Who those bishops were Sander does not state; but, he believes that they were "afraid of declaring their sentiments, and would not trust the King, fearing the question might be put to ensnare them."

Very likely the question might have been suggested by Lord Hertford to his dying brother-in-law, in order to find out how far the bishops really subscribed to the oath of supremacy. Sander further affirms that Dr. Gardynier advised the King to call a Parliament, and to lay the whole question before them; and provided he had not time for

* Sir James Macintosh's *History of England*, vol. i. p. 237.

such an expedient, he should then publish his intention in writing; that when the performance was impracticable, the bare desire would be acceptable to God Almighty; that when Dr. Gardyner retired from the royal presence Lord Hertford and Paget "scattered the King's scruples, and brought him back to his former feeling of hatred and revenge."

This narrative is not sustained by any reliable document. Let the reader remember that Hertford and Cranmer made their *arrangements privately*, in Henry's reign, for the overthrow of the national religion. Harpsfield, a good authority on the matter, and one well acquainted with the King's state of mind during his last illness, has stated his belief that the King was closely watched by the Seymours, lest he should make any "spiritual changes." Harpsfield had one interview with the King, and was to have seen him on the following day, but was not permitted to do so. Harpsfield, in a letter to Gardyner, for whom the King entertained a high opinion as a cleric, states that Henry was greatly affected at meeting him, "sobbed several times, and was most anxious that Masses should be offered up for his soul's health."* The "will" of the King confirms this statement. Nicholas Harpsfield had been many years confessor to Queen Katharine. It is no wonder that the remorseful monarch should desire to see the confessor, whom he had known for nearly forty years.

During the last illness of Henry VIII., he wished to confer with several of his old friends; but Hertford made excuses for their non-attendance. Three times the unhappy

* Thorndale's Letters to Father Chauncy.

King requested that he might see his daughter Mary. At last Hertford brought the Princess to the bedside of the dying monarch. Henry is described as weeping and sobbing, requesting that they might be alone. Cranmer and Hertford retired with reluctance, but, upon second thought, at the King's desire, his faithful servant, Sir Anthony Brown, remained in the royal chamber. The King then addressed his daughter in a very affectionate manner; and, taking her by the hand, he said :—

“ Mary, my dear child, I know very well that fortune has been most adverse to you, that I have caused you infinite sorrow. I have not given you in marriage, as I desired to do. This was, however, according to the Will of God, or to the unhappy state of my affairs, or to your own ill luck; but I pray you take it all in good part, and promise me to remain as a kind and loving mother to your brother Edward, whom I shall leave a helpless little child.”*

The princess was not permitted to see her brother. Lord Hertford and Dr. Cranmer had made it impossible for such meetings to take place. King Henry's object in “requesting the motherly care” of Mary for her brother was, presumably, in his condition of mind, to look after the boy's religious training. This inference may very fairly be drawn from the “Catholic spirit” of Henry's last testament.

* Polino, p. 172; Harpsfield's correspondence with Gardynier. It is possible that Polino's information was derived from Harpsfield, or Sir Anthony Brown, both of whom were the secret agents of the Princess Mary, about the time of her father's death.

CHAPTER XII.

DEATH OF HENRY VIII.

THE reign of Henry VIII. extended to thirty-seven years, nine months, and fifteen days. Of the closing scenes of his life little is known, but that he was confined to his bed for several weeks at the old Palace of Westminster, where he died on the 31st of January, 1547. The day before his death the King held a long conversation with Lord Hertford, Sir William Paget, and Maister Denny. There is no official record of what took place, for if such documents had been penned they were destroyed by Paget. Edward Denny, Dr. Whyte, and some domestics closely connected with the King, affirm that his Highness expressed the most terrible anxiety about the altered condition of religion; he wished the new heresy *to be crushed out of the State*; that he closely questioned the members of his Council as to their attachment to the Catholic Church; "that they all *swore*, on *bended knees*, that they would *never desert the faith of their fathers*." Yet Dean Hook assures his readers that all the religious changes which took place in Edward's reign, were *privately arranged and agreed upon during the lifetime of Henry*. Hertford and Paget attended Mass in the dying monarch's room the morning *before* his death. "Their presence that morning, and the fact of both *receiving Holy Communion with the King*," gave him some comfort as to their sincerity in those terrible intervals of remorse with

which he was visited that last day of his existence. Cranmer, however, was absent on that day. Was his absence caused by scruples as to making fresh oaths and new protestations as to the maintenance of the old faith of England? Or did he shrink from the scene in which Lord Hertford performed so characteristically the primal part in deception and falsehood? Never was human being so deceived as Henry Tudor at this closing point of his existence. Let the reader ponder on the words of Dean Hook, and then contemplate the conduct of Lord Hertford—*the predetermined maker of the Reformation—on his knees at the couch of his dying brother-in-law, swearing eternal fealty to the principles of the Catholic Church, with the said Henry Tudor as its Pontiff.*

The last day of Henry Tudor had now passed, and the night of dying agony commenced. It was a condition of fearful bodily suffering to the King, broken by intervals of remorse and prayer. Had human pride vanished? Had mercy returned to the Royal breast? Was the King at peace with all the world? No; another act of vengeance was to be consummated. For a year or so before Henry's death the warrants for executions were signed by Commission, in consequence of the King's health. But, in this case, the moribund tyrant expressed his determination and pleasure to sign Norfolk's death-warrant with his own hand.* Dean Hook justly remarks that nothing more terrible than this scene can be imagined. "At ten of the clock, *when the cold sweat of death covered his face,* the prostrated monarch was making a faint effort to sign

* Domestic State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign.

the fatal document." The action manifested the mastery of a ruthless spirit, and evinced the domination of a final impenitence. In the very arms of death he would destroy the living ; on the threshold of the grave he would turn from the presence of his God to make one more sacrifice to the Enemy of Mankind. Yet even that thirst for the blood of an illustrious subject, whose age he had left nearly childless, might not have been the worst, if it had not been the last of the crimes of this unforgiving prince. A few hours more elapsed, and the shadow of death was casting a deep and solemn gloom upon the royal chamber. The end now came ! The final contest was brief ; and, in a pulse's throb, the spirit of the dreaded King Henry was wafted to the presence of that Omnipotent Tribunal where so many of his iniquitous judgments deserved to be reversed. A death-bed has been described as the altar of forgiveness, where charity and tears commingle as the spirit of prayer communes. These attributes were absent from the dying couch of Henry Tudor, whose last despairing words, chronicled by Anthony Denny, "All is lost!" express an awful consciousness of the retribution due to a wicked and truculent career.*

For three days the King's death was concealed from the public, to enable the Archbishop of Canterbury and Lord Hertford to make their arrangements. It was agreed by the Council that all the religious ceremonies of the olden creed of England should be strictly adhered to. Church-bells tolled, and Mass was celebrated daily throughout London for the "health of the late King's soul."

* Leti, Thenet, Harpsfield, Godwin, Burnet, Rapin, Macintosh, Tytler and Lingard.

The funeral biers wherein the royal corpse was laid, stood in the midst of the Privy Chamber surrounded with lights ; and the various Offices for the dead were repeated again and again. A continual watch was made by the chaplains and gentlemen of the Privy Chamber, in their "course and order, night and day, for five days," till the chapel was ready, "wherein was a goodly hearse, with eighty square tapers, every light containing two feet in length, in the whole 1,800 or 2,000 weight in wax, garnished with pensils, escutcheons, banners, and bannerets of descents ; and at the four corners, banners of saints, beaten out in fine gold upon damask, with a majesty (*i.e.*, canopy) over a rich cloth of tissue, and valance of black silk, and fringe of black silk and gold. The barriers without the hearse, and the sides and floor of the chapel were covered with black cloth to the high altar, and the sides and ceiling set with the banners and standards of St. George and others."*

On the 2nd of February the corpse was removed and brought into the chapel, by the Lord Chamberlain and officers of the household, and then placed within the hearse, under a pall of rich cloth of tissue, garnished with escutcheons, and a cloth of gold set with precious stones.

The body continued in the chapel for twelve days, "with Masses and *dirges* sung and said every day," Norray each day standing at the choir door, and beginning with these words, in a loud voice:—"Of your charity pray for the soul of the high and mighty prince, our late Sovereign and King, Henry VIII."

The royal remains being carried to Windsor to be buried,

* MS. in the College of Arms.

stood all night among the dilapidated walls of the convent of Sion, and there "the leaden coffin being cleft by the shaking of the carriage, the pavement of the church was wetted with Henry's blood. In the morning came plumbers to solder the coffin, under whose feet—I tremble while I write it—(says the author) was suddenly seen *a dog creeping and licking up the King's blood*. If you ask me how I know this, I answer, William Greville, who could scarcely drive away the dog, told me, and so did the plumber also."*

The dismantled convent alluded to had been the prison of Catherine Howard, whose execution took place five years the day before the corpse of her ruthless destroyer reached its temporary resting-place. The reader will remember the denunciation of Father Peto, at Greenwich Church, in 1538, in presence of Henry and Anna Boleyn, when the fearless friar compared the monarch to Ahab, and told him to his face, that "the dogs would, in like manner, lick his blood." Miss Strickland would condemn any assumption of this shocking incident as the fulfilment of a vaticination. Be it, however, coincidence or the verification of prophecy, the fact stands, and needs no disquisition. Doubtless the worst matter about these *parentalia* of a cruel despot was the conduct of Bishop Gardiner, who preached the funereal sermon at Windsor, on the 16th of February, taking for his text, "Blessed are they who die in the Lord," in which he ascribed to Henry all the virtues he possessed not, and described the loss "which both high and low had sustained in the death of so good and gracious a king."

* MS. in the Sloane Collection. This document has been quoted by several high historical authorities.

To the credit of truth the object of Gardyners's false panegyric has had no praise from writers of any repute, save Mr. Froude. Even Hume, who rejoices in that change of the national religion which was the outcome of Henry's rapacity, dishonesty, and cruelty, avers that a catalogue of this King's vices would comprehend "many of the worst qualities incident to human nature."

To show that the monarch, who has been accepted by so many unread people of England as the *first* Protestant King of this realm, was even buried according to the rites and observances of the Catholic Church, I copy the ceremony from the before-mentioned MS. in the College of Arms :—

"The corpse being let down by a vice, with the help of sixteen tall yeomen of the guard, Bishop Gardyners, standing at the head of the vault, proceeded with the Burial Service, and about the same (the bishop) stood all the head officers of the household—as the lord great master, the lord chamberlain, the lord treasurer, comptroller, serjeant porter, and the four gentlemen ushers in ordinary, with their staves and rods in their hands; and when the mould was brought and cast into the grave by the officiating prelates, at the words—*Pulvis pulveri, cinis cineri*, then first the great lord master, and, after him, the lord chamberlain and all the rest brake their staves in shivers, upon their heads, and cast them after the corpse into the pit, with exceeding sorrow and heaviness, not without grievous sighs and tears. After this, the *De Profundis* was said, the grave covered over with planks, and Garter, attended by his officers, stood in the midst of the choir, and proclaimed the young King's titles, and the rest of his officers repeated the same after him thrice. Then the trumpets sounded with great melody and courage, to the comfort of all them that were present."

On some of the banners carried at Henry's funeral were quartered the arms of Jane Seymour and of Catherine Parr, the only two wives he had acknowledged, out of six.

In the final arrangement of his "will," Henry struck off the name of Bishop Gardynere from the list of executors, "as violent and dangerous." Lord Parr, the Queen's brother, and the Marquis of Dorset, who had married the King's niece, were set aside as *sectarian* or *dangerous*.^{*} "Sectarian," in this case, was meant to infer that they belonged to the Reformers, and were consequently rejected by the dying King as unfit persons to carry out his "Catholic will." Would it not appear probable that the bewildered monarch had, at this time, implicit confidence in the Catholic principles of Dr. Cranmer and Lord Hertford, or he would have likewise cancelled their appointment as executors to his "will?" But let it again be impressed upon the reader that the King's Council had most solemnly sworn, on several occasions, to faithfully carry out his "last testament," and he could not possibly consider them so wicked as to deliberately commit perjury. Besides, Henry was frequently struck by the "*solemnity and piety with which the Archbishop celebrated Mass in the Royal Closet, and the reverence with which Lord Hertford received Holy Communion on other occasions.*" How awfully must that unhappy King have been deceived! The venal courtiers may, no doubt, have been astounded at the fearful duplicity and blasphemous courage evinced by Lord Hertford and the Archbishop of Canterbury during the last illness of the King. Our virtuous old English ancestors considered it a wicked and heartless action to deceive the dying; but Henry's Council thought otherwise. In fact, posterity can scarcely credit those awful revelations if they had not been thoroughly authenticated.

^{*} Domestic State Papers of the close of Henry's reign; Lingard, vol. v; Froude, vol. v.

An hour or so after Henry's death, Hertford and Paget held a conversation outside the apartment where the body of the dead King lay, still warm, and horribly convulsed in feature. This brief subdued parley between the whisperers was the first access to a deliberate perjury. Paget hesitated, remarking upon the dreadful storm raging at the time, but the sudden appearance of Cranmer upon the scene supplied him with confidence. A look from one to the other was understood; the trio communed with intelligible glances; and, fearing to speak at that awful moment, they retired to rest. The first step had been taken.*

"The will of Henry VIII.," writes Miss Strickland, was as replete with seeds of strife for his subjects as the capricious acts of his life had been. This monarch, who had on the suppression of the monasteries desecrated so many altars, and scattered the funds of so many mortuary chapels and endowed chantries, in utter disregard of the intentions of the founders, whose very tombs were afterwards violated, left by his will £600 per annum *for Masses to be celebrated for his soul's health*. He had likewise enjoined his executors *to bring up his son in the Catholic faith*.†

Miss Strickland gently reproves Lord Hertford for his duplicity and treachery about the period of Henry's demise. "Far wiser," observes Miss Strickland, "would it have been for the Protestant Protector to have boldly founded his opposition on the obvious truths, and argued on the inconsistency of Henry's 'last testament,' and his deeds; but

* MS. Letter of Edward Denny, to Sir Anthony Browne; Dr. Whyte's Correspondence with Father Peto concerning the last hours of King Henry.

† Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. v. first edit. p. 165.

Lord Hertford, like most politicians, sacrificed the majesty of truth to expediency, which conduct involved him in a labyrinth of disputation and self-contradiction."

In Heylin's "Reformation," page 302, also Fuller and Rymer, the reader will find Henry Tudor's "last testament" printed at full length. There can be no doubt that the man who devised this carefully drawn document was a Catholic, and every allusion to the doctrines and practices of the ancient creed are put in the most emphatic manner.

Some Puritan writers question the accuracy of Henry's "Catholic Will," upon which Hume remarks, "There is no reasonable ground to suspect its authenticity."*

The executors of the will took no less than *twelve solemn oaths at different times, kneeling at the bedside of the dying monarch*, that they would fulfil to the letter *all the instructions written in the said "will."* Let it be remembered that the King's "will" was executed on the 30th of December, 1546,† one year and twenty-eight days *before* his death; and during that interval no part of it was revoked. According to Sir Anthony Browne — one of the Royal Household—"its Catholicity was made stronger by the alteration of words." This Royal testament, or "will," was never made public. Even Catherine Parr was left "uninformed," only to assure her that she was not to be the guardian of the child, who, by the King's command was to be *educated a Catholic*. Now, I would contend, that it would appear from this circumstance that the dying Henry had confidence in the Catholicity of Hertford and Cranmer. Surely a king making a "will" so Catholic could

* Hume's History of England, vol. iii. (folio edit.) p. 279.

† Chapter House. Royal MS.

scarcely doubt *his* Archbishop of Canterbury who had so frequently celebrated Mass in his chamber, and had taken so many oaths, and pronounced with so fervid enunciation, his design to faithfully carry out his "will." The King must have looked upon his brother-in-law, Hertford, in a similar light of credence, whilst Catherine Parr, whom he strongly suspected to be imbued with the "new learning," was not named in the education of his son. How far the *Catholic* Lord Hertford and the *Catholic* Archbishop Cranmer—the chief men of the Council—fulfilled their sworn pledges, the history of young Edward's reign is superabundant evidence. Mr. Froude remarks, that Lord Hertford did not "*dare to make public the last conversation he held with the King the day before his death.*"* This sentence contains a withering verdict, and is an exposition of the author's sentiments as to Hertford's actions at this time, not the less valuable from its fortuitous candour. Another question remains still unexplained. Did Hertford and Cranmer read for the pre-doomed boy-king at any period of his painful regal pupilage anything, even a syllable, from his father's "will?" or what explanation did they give him as to the *special command* to have him *educated a Catholic*? Did they impart to him his father's injunctions for "Masses for his soul's health, and the maintenance of the olden religion?" Do the eulogists of Cranmer approve the unparalleled deception in this regard of himself and his *confrères* in the Council? Do they approve the worst kind of perjury—the *violation of solemn oaths sworn at the bedside of a dying man*?

The men who composed the Council during Henry's

* Froude, vol. v. p. 2.

latter days were persons raised from the "lowest ranks of the English gentry;" "needy sharpeners," as Polydore Vergil describes them; remarkable for no talent excepting the art of skilful compliance with every act of persecution or evil-doing that an evil spirit could prompt a despotic ruler to commit. Miss Strickland affirms that, "with the exception of his murdered tutor—Bishop Fisher—Henry's spiritual advisers, whether Catholic or Reformer, had all been false to their trust. They had flattered his worst passions, and lulled his guilty conscience." As the reader has already seen, the legal advisers of the King, from the retirement of Sir Thomas More down to Henry's death, were the most unprincipled and the basest men that ever dishonoured the legislative rule of England. The outrages upon law and equity in which the men who were supposed to act beneath the King were concerned, would seem almost incredible, if the historical researches of the last twenty years had not removed all doubts as to the facts of the reign of Henry Tudor and his surroundings.*

A note in Lingard's History of England, vol. viii. p. 241, states that, in 1813, Sir Henry Hallford, the State Physician, in the presence of the Prince Regent (afterwards George IV.), examined the coffin of Charles I., deposited in the vaults at Windsor Castle. Many people may have seen a likeness then taken of the "White King,"

* I refer the reader to a very important passage in Lingard, vol. v. p. 212, bearing upon the intrigues of the *Camarilla* which besieged the death-bed of the King "suggesting alterations in his last testament." It is worthy of remark, that during Henry's life-time he had drawn up no less than eighty-six "last testaments." "He had," writes Sir Anthony Browne, "a great horror of death, and when some gloomy feelings visited his Highness, he generally began to think of altering his will."

with the point of the nose eliminated by decay, but bearing unmistakable resemblance of the clear-cut features of life, and the *post-mortem* growth of beard. Close by the remains of the best of Stuarts lay the coffin (of lead, the wood portions having mouldered) of Henry Tudor, the "Defender of the Faith." Henry's coffin, we are told, had been "beaten in above the middle," and a considerable opening in that part exposed the "skeleton of the once-dreaded monarch." Another contemporary's version of this lugubrious scene is to the effect that "the golden beard of 'bluff King Hal' had grown down to the feet, that the body was perfect, and the gentle, good king, seemed as if in a slumber." How interesting this at the epoch of the Regency when "George the Third was King!" And how comforting, too, for the worshippers of the great Tudor and his historical encomiasts! Lord Herbert states that at the furtive and midnight burial of Charles I., Henry's coffin "*was open*, presenting nothing but a skeleton." And his lordship has added, that "a soldier contrived to carry off a bone from the remains, with which he *hafted a knife*." This is all I know of a matter to which a correspondent has called my attention in reference to a preceding work of mine. I had not then Lord Herbert's statement before me; but one cannot help opining that *Hamlet*, in the graveyard, was far more out of latitude in his disposition of the great Roman's head than was the unsophisticated soldier of Lord Herbert, who put to so apt a use the osseous remnant of the relentless Tudor. At the last moment, I have ascertained that a Spanish historian relates that the soldier above-named presented the "newly-hafted knife" to Oliver Cromwell.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE MASKS REMOVED.

THE student of history cannot fail to perceive that there are certain periods when the ordinary principles which regulate human affairs seem to be inverted—when new and unheard-of incentives agitate the guiding spirits of the times, and the current of society, instead of flowing on in the steady course of ordinary existence, appears to advance with the swift smoothness of a river ere it leaps a cataract. If this be true of great political events, it may with adequate consistency be predicated of religious changes, although the examples of wholesale mutations in this regard are but very rare. It would appear that in the case of the English Reformation all pre-existing motives of conduct lost their influence; the previous yearnings, the associations, and memories of antiquity—prejudices if it be the will of some so to designate them—were forgotten, the “olden learning” succumbed to new-born enthusiasm; a state grown grey in years suffered the pains of sudden parturition, and finally a nation guided by men impelled by interest, love of change, and, in some mediate measure perhaps, conviction, divested itself of a creed as in a political phase it would slip the leashes of human authority. But the change of the people was not so rapid as that of their movers. Far from it.

John Foxe and his contemporaries have drawn glowing pictures of the extraordinary merits of Edward Seymour, Earl of Hertford, historically known as the "Protector Somerset." His proceedings have been considered miraculous by a class of eccentric Puritans; but those men wrote amidst the smoke of infatuated fanaticism which utterly blinded them to the truth.* The few who still have any trust in Gilbert Burnet—and who can have faith in him only because they do not know his character—may wish to see his portrait of the Protector. He observes:—

"Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, was a person of great virtues, *eminent for piety, humble and affable in his greatness, sincere and candid in all his actions!* He was a better captain than a councillor—had been often successful in his undertakings, was always careful of the poor and the oppressed; and, in a word, had as *many virtues and as few faults as most great men have ever had.* The Papists loaded his fame while living, and his memory when dead, with the blackest and foulest calumnies."

"Able, without being wise," writes Mr. Froude, "Edward Seymour possessed precisely the qualities which would be most dangerous to him, if trusted with power in an arduous crisis."†

To come from Puritan romance to plain facts, Somerset commenced his Protectorate on Edward's accession, by an act of deliberate perjury. His very first proceeding was to violate the solemn oath—in fact a series of oaths—which he had taken to the dying Henry, that he would carry out his last "will and testament," almost every provision of which he set aside. Somerset, no doubt, courted popularity with the riotous mobs of London, by telling them that he intended

* See Stowe; Ellis, 2nd series, vol. ii. p. 215.

† Froude's History of England, vol. iv. p. 507.

to create great institutions for the benefit of the people out of the property of the "lazy and profligate Churchmen whom the Lord in His mercy had caused to be dispersed." What he accomplished for the lower classes, history has ever since exposed; by the higher classes he was utterly and unanimously hated, and they omitted no device to compass his overthrow; yet the division of honesty between the Protector and his enemies seems to have been evenly balanced. That Henry VIII., in the blackest day of his tyranny, regarded his brother-in-law as a man after his own heart, is proved by the fact of his entrusting him (then Lord Hertford) with one of the most sanguinary commissions ever given by a cruel monarch and executed by a fitting subject. Three years before Henry's death, on the 10th of April, 1544, he sent the following instructions to Hertford, then commanding the army invading Scotland:—

"Put all to fire and sword, burn Edinburgh Town, and raze and deface it, when you have sacked it, and gotten what you can out of it. Do what you can out of hand, and without long tarrying. Beat down and overthrow the castles, sack Holyrood House, and as many towns and villages about Edinburgh as you conveniently can. Sack Leith, and burn and subvert it and all the rest, putting man, woman, and child to fire and sword, without exception when any resistance shall be made against you; and this done pass over to Fife-land, and extend like extremities and destruction in all towns and villages whereunto ye may reach conveniently; not forgetting, amongst the rest, so to spoil and turn upside down the Cardinal's town of St. Andrew's, as the upper stone may be the nether, and not one stick stand upon another, sparing no creature alive within the same, specially such as, either in friendship or in blood, be allied to the Cardinal." *

* Despatches of King Henry VIII. to Lord Hertford, commanding the English army in Scotland; Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv.

Is not this edict one of the most sanguinary and atrocious passages in all history? Titus, son of the economic Vespasian, could scarcely have issued a more terrible order to his legions when besieging Jerusalem. Yet historians of accredited research and high reputation cannot discover any evil qualities in Henry Tudor, although the records and State Papers of his reign are at hand. Strange eccentricity! Sharon Turner presents the following portrait of the monarch who issued the above order to Lord Hertford. "*King Henry was warm-hearted, gentle and affable in private life, untainted in morals, sincere in religion, respected abroad, and beloved at home. . . .* Happily for mankind, Henry had *none of the inhuman qualities*, the fierce spirit, and persevering insensibility of a great and active conqueror. He took *no pleasure in causing or contemplating fields of human slaughter.*" Had Mr. Turner lost all recollection of the fate of the "Pilgrims of Grace?" If such writing as the foregoing be not an utter inversion of historical truth, there is no meaning in terms.

In one of his despatches, Lord Hertford exultingly informed King Henry that he was assured by a right trusty agent, that so much damage had not been done in Scotland by "fire and sword" for the last one hundred years.* The conflagration of Edinburgh lasted for three days and three nights. The barbarous conduct of Hertford's Italian and German mercenaries during the burning of the Scotch capital, raised an universal feeling of wrath and horror throughout the country. So excessive was the cruelty, that it shocked even the English borderers. . . .

* Despatches of the Earl of Hertford to King Henry VIII.

An advanced guard of one hundred Irish mercenaries was dispatched by Lord Hertford to "harm and spoil the villages in a more complete manner." * Tytler describes Hertford's despatches from Scotland as written "in a business style." The "original," or memorable despatch, has been preserved in Hayne's State Papers.† It was once styled the "bloody ledger."

It has been contended by the reckless panegyrists of Lord Hertford, that he would not act on such a sanguinary command, even from the King; that he was "*too God-fearing to act in such a spirit.*" In fact, Henry's despatches to his brother-in-law are questioned, and Hertford's reply as well. But we must accept as genuine the documents in the well-known and authenticated handwriting of the chief actors. In Lord Hertford's despatch to the King, he relates in a very cool, business-like fashion, what occurred. "*I have burnt down seven monasteries and some other religious houses; sixteen castles and towns, five market towns; two hundred and forty-three villages, thirteen mills, and three hospitals.*" Let the Puritan admirers of Hertford reflect upon the last item in the despatch of this brave and humane general. "*Three hospitals.*" Perhaps the greater part of what the entire country possessed at that period.

But the "good pious Lord Hertford," as he was styled by Cranmer, fared so successfully in his mission of slaughter, rapine, and conflagration, that he felt empowered to give thanks to the "God of battles," and what he thought more of, received the congratulations and approval of his King.

* Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv. p. 347; Original Letters; State Papers.

† State Papers of Henry VIII.'s reign, in connection with Scotland.

Surely this course of bloodshed, rapine, and cruelty was a strange preparation in a man about to assume the task of reforming the religion of a nation ; yet Lord Hertford was one of the most active of the early Reformers. He certainly had a vast worldly interest in upsetting the olden faith ; but, whatever his motives, there is no doubt of his potent influence in establishing the new religious institutions. As to the statement that he was a friend to the people, the answer is to be found in *his* laws for the enslavement of that people, and the pitiless mode in which those black statutes were enforced.

Judging from the State Papers, Henry was not very trustful as to the integrity of his brother-in-law and the other members of the family, for he earnestly commended his son Edward to the care and protection of Charles the Fifth and Francis the First.* The King must have had some serious misgivings when he made such an appeal to those monarchs, who could have had little sympathy with him or his children.

Hertford commenced his career of Protector with a prayer, in which he described himself as “chosen *by God* to rule the country.” All the circumstances of the case considered, this “prayer” may fairly be pronounced blasphemous. The prayer in question runs thus :—“Thou, Lord, by Thy Providence has *caused me to rule*. I am *by Thy appointment*, minister for the King ; shepherd for Thy people. By Thee Kings do reign, and from Thee all power is derived ; *govern me as I shall govern*.”† Mr. Froude,

* Memoranda of Directions to the Ambassadors in France and Flanders, MSS. State Paper Office.

† State Papers ; Strype's Memorials, vol. xli. p. 11.

who in other passages ranks with Strype as a eulogist of Somerset, remarks of the prayer that "*Somerset's own intrigues, and not the will of heaven, had placed him in the position which he had occupied.*" *

When King Henry was buried, one of the first public acts of Lord Hertford was to summon a Parliament in the interest of those by whom he was supported. This was accomplished by compulsion and purchase. He sent commissioners throughout the country to set aside the ancient Catholic worship, and intrude the formularies *privately prepared in Henry's reign by Cranmer, Poynt, and Ridley*. The bishops received orders to abolish in their respective dioceses the custom of "bearing candles on Candlemas Day, of receiving ashes on Ash Wednesday, and of carrying palms on Palm Sunday."† Those were ancient customs, to which the people were strongly attached, and their removal in some districts led to riot and disorder. The Mass was not at first superseded; the innovators cautiously feeling their way. The gross language used by Bale and Poynt, in relation to the celibacy of the religious orders, gave offence to the people of Devonshire and other parts of the kingdom in which the olden faith was illustrated by numerous and venerable memorials. The conduct of those clerics, when they made missions into the country, was a special source of scandal and ill-feeling. As to John Bale, he cared not what he said or how he acted. Coverdale was also a stipendiary of the Council, and traversed the country, bestowing praises on the Protector and the young King.

* Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 14.

† Wilkins, ii. p. 23. Domestic State Papers of Edward's reign.

When the new Liturgy was first "practised by command of the Council," Coverdale expressed his admiration of the "Holy Work." He eulogised the homilies and the paraphrase, which, he said, "emanated from men who were filled with the Lord." King Edward was "*the high and chief admiral of the great army of the Lord of Hosts ; principal captain and governor of us all under Him, the most noble ruler of his ships even our most comfortable Noah, whom the eternal God hath chosen to be the bringer of us unto rest and quietness.*"*

Seeing that the King had not reached his tenth year when this nautical panegyric was pronounced, the reader will be apt to set down the wisdom of the monarch and the honesty of the flatterer as equally genuine. But the reforming prelates were all noted for their despicable adulation—one notable instance of which the reader has seen in Latimer's letter about Edward's birth.

The "setting aside" of religion, and deposing the bishops, were the first acts of the juvenile King's Council before the new Parliament met. The constitutional judges and lawyers of those times—venal and dishonest as most of them were—held the opinion of Lord Southampton, that this proceeding was illegal. Southampton was dismissed from the Chancery because he stated boldly to the Council that he would not violate himself, nor be a party to any member of the Council breaking the oath they had sworn to carry out as to the late King's "will." Lord Hertford, in order to overbear all opposition to his design to set aside the late monarch's "will," created himself, as a

* Apud Strype, ii. p. 65.

first step, Duke of Somerset, and then procured a patent from the boy-King, by which he entirely overthrew, wrote Hume, "the last testament of Henry VIII., and produced a total revolution in the Government, which looked like a subversion of all the laws of the realm." * The bishops and a large number of the secular clergy were soon awakened to a sense of their danger. They publicly condemned the Government schemes for reforming religion; their impeachment, arrest, and imprisonment followed. Tunstal, Bishop of Durham, was dismissed from the Council-board. "Tunstal bore a good reputation, and was a man of the most unexceptionable character in the realm."† His conduct, however, in Henry's reign was similar to that of Gardyner and other Court prelates.

Tunstal, and the other prelates, were now beginning to reap the reward of men who subordinate their sacred duties to the demands of the world. Bonner was replaced in the See of London by Ridley. On this occasion Bonner acted with firmness, making a remarkable declaration of his principles, and stating his readiness to perish in their maintenance. In Henry's reign he did great mischief to religion; and seconded the King in all his sacrilegious confiscations. Lord Hertford was then Bonner's personal friend.

Gardyner, being the most distinguished, as well as the ablest, of the prelacy, was the first selected for impeachment and persecution; indeed, he did not wait for the action of the Council, but proclaimed their proceedings as contrary to statute law, usage, and equity. The old

* Hume, vol. iii. (folio. edit.) p. 298; Burnet, vol. ii.; Records, vol. vi.; Rymer.

† Hume, vol. iii. p. 297.

accusation of ignorance and incapacity has been made against the bishops of this period. Burnet, writing of them, says, that they were "ignorant and weak men who understood religion little, and valued it less." David Hume regards them as "prelates of blameless morals and conscientiously attached to their religious principles."* The sacrifices those prelates made at the accession of Elizabeth confirm the evidence of the philosophic historian. If Hume, left to himself, had lived a little later, where would have been Burnet as an authority? If Gardyners policy during the divorce controversy helped to promote the proximate change of religion in England, he subsequently laboured with zeal and ability to sustain the olden faith of his fathers.

Though excluded from the Council, Dr. Gardyners set himself openly and fearlessly to oppose the measures brought forward under Somerset to change the established religion, and there can be no doubt that he had the established law upon his side. Before a Parliament was called, the Council, disregarding the Statute of the Six Articles, which was still in force, issued an order for changing the ceremonial of Divine Worship, published a book of homilies to be read by all priests, inculcating the new doctrines, and appointed ministers to go into every diocese to see that the new regulations were observed. Gardyners expressed his firm resolve that if the visitors came into his diocese he should proceed against them, that they might be restrained and punished. He also made representations on the subject to the Protector, and impressed upon him the illegality of those proceedings.

* Hume (folio), vol. iii. p. 297.

"'Tis a dangerous thing," says Dr. Gardynier, "to use too much freedom in researches of this kind. If you cut the old canal the water is apt to run farther than you have a mind to. If you indulge the humour of novelty you cannot put a stop to people's demands, nor govern their indiscretions at pleasure. For my part," continued he, on another occasion, "my sole concern is to manage the third and last act of my life with decency, and to make a handsome exit off the stage. Provided this point is secured, I am not solicitous about the rest. I am already by nature condemned to death. No man can give me a pardon from this sentence; nor so much as procure me a reprieve. To speak my mind, and to act as my conscience directs, are two branches of liberty which I can never part with. Sincerity in speech, and integrity in action are entertaining qualities. They will stick by a man when everything else takes its leave, and I must not resign them upon any consideration. The best of it is, if I do not throw them away myself, no man can force them from me. But if I give them up, then I am ruined by myself, and deserve to lose all my preferments."*

Gardynier was in consequence summoned before the Council, and required to promise obedience to the Royal injunctions. He appealed to the approaching Parliament. The Protector's party became afraid of the resistance which, as a member of the House of Peers, Gardynier might offer to their measures, and they were still more alarmed at the "flames he was beginning to kindle out of doors, by addressing himself to the religious feelings of the people." Therefore, though he could not be charged with an offence against the law, he was forthwith committed to the Fleet, and detained a close prisoner till the end of the session. Attempts were in vain made during his confine-

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii. p. 228; Hume, vol. iii. p. 296; State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

ment, to gain him over to the Reformers. On one occasion, Cranmer, finding he could make no impression upon him, exclaimed in a sneering manner, "Brother of Winchester, you like not anything new unless you be yourself the author thereof." "Your Grace wrongeth me," replied the old conservative prelate, "I have never been author yet of any one new thing, for which I thank my God."* An official was subsequently sent to Gardynere to say that, if he would soften his opposition he might have a place in the Council, and be restored to his See. But he answered indignantly, "that his character and conscience forbade it, and that if he agreed on such terms, he should *deserve to be whipped in every market town in the realm, and then to be hanged for an example, as the veriest varlet that ever was bishop in any realm of Christendom.*"†

At the end of the session, Dr. Gardynere was set at liberty, and ordered by the Council to preach at Paul's Cross before the King, on the Feast of St. Peter, with an injunction that he should not treat on any controverted question. He informed his friends that "this was perhaps the only opportunity the young Prince might have of hearing the truth, and that he was determined, whatever might be the consequence, to explain to him the true Catholic doctrine with respect to the Mass and the Holy Eucharist." He kept his word; the sermon was a congeries of arguments, supplemented by eloquence. Dr. Whyte who was present, considered it "one of the ablest explanations perhaps ever

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii.

† See Correspondence at full length, in State Papers; Campbell's Chancellors, vol. ii. p. 51; Foss's English Judges, vol. v.; Lingard, vol. v.; Turner vol. xi.

offered at Paul's Cross, of the doctrines of the Catholic Church.* Every dogma was minutely explained to the King ; and the conclusion of the discourse struck a warning at the hearts of many present, for he almost predicted the fate which befell my Lord of Hertford, and my Lord of Canterbury."† The prelate who had the courage to preach such a sermon was not an adversary whom the Council could tolerate. On the following day Gardyner was committed to the Tower.

In Burnet's "Collectanea," and a late edition of Foxe's "Martyrs," vol. vi., will be seen an important correspondence, and other documents, which show clearly the treatment Gardyner received from Somerset. In fact, the letters in Somerset's own handwriting, and the action he took in this case, prove him to have been both arbitrary and unjust, whilst invoking the name of the Holy Trinity in defence of his actions. As I have frequently remarked in the course of this historical inquiry, the Duke of Somerset, like his colleagues of the previous reign, must be judged by his actions, which leave no doubt as to what were the motives of the man.

During Dr. Gardyner's absence from Parliament the Statute of the Six Articles was repealed, and Bills passed allowing the clergy to marry ; for the administration of the "Sacrament of the Lord's Supper" to the laity in both kinds ; for uniformity of worship, and for the usage of the New Liturgy.‡ Many of the bishops, animated by Gardyner's

* Old St. Paul's was 230 feet longer than the present building, or about half as long again as York Minster, which is the Cathedral of largest area now in England. In the first volume I have referred to this church.

† Dr. Whyte's Correspondence with the Princess Mary. This MS. is still extant, and is said to be amongst the MS. treasures of the Vatican.

‡ Statutes of Edward VI.

example, refused to conform, and Somerset hesitated to proceed against them ; but he accomplished his designs in due time. When Gardyner had been confined for nearly three years (1550), a resolution was taken to deprive him and his brethren of their bishoprics, so that the " Reformed Church," as then styled, might be complete. The method of proceeding against Dr. Gardyner was " gross, violent, and hardly disguised by any colour of law or justice.* A deputation of the Council was sent to tempt him with questions. Finding him, as they said, " more pliant than they expected," they rose in their demands, and at last insisted on " unconditional submission, and an acknowledgment of past errors." Perceiving that it was their purpose either to " dishonour or to ruin him," Gardyner determined not to gratify them by any further compliance. He therefore refused to answer any questions till he should recover his liberty, and concluded by asserting his innocence, and demanding a fair trial. In a few days later he was brought before the Council, and when " certain articles " were read, and, in the King's name, he was required to answer them, he replied that " in all things his Majesty could lawfully command, he was most ready to obey ; but for as much as there were divers things required of him that his conscience and honour as a prelate would not bear, therefore he prayed them to have him excused."† Somerset immediately sequestered his ecclesiastical revenues, and threatened further

* Lord Campbell's Chancellors, vol. ii.

† Dr. Gardyner was required to approve of the suppression of monasteries, and the secularization of ecclesiastical property ; the homilies of Cranmer ; the paraphrase of Erasmus ; and of every religious innovation established by the King's Council.

proceedings. On the following day the sequestration of Dr. Gardyner's ecclesiastical revenues was carried out by the Government, and an intimation was given to him, that if he did not submit within a few weeks, he should be finally deprived of his bishopric.* At the expiration of the notice given, Gardyner seemed even more devoted to his principles than before. A commission was then cited to the Metropolitan, three bishops, and six laymen, to bring him judicially to trial. The proceeding involved an entire subversion of statute law; Gardyner entered his protest against the Commission. He argued against the validity of their actions, which he contended were not founded on any statute law or precedent of England. The trial lasted three weeks, but before Gardyner could "put in evidence in reply to the several charges," Archbishop Cranmer rose and pronounced judgment in the case, declaring the "Lord Bishop of Winchester contumacious, and that he should be deprived of his bishopric forthwith."† Gardyner appealed to the King, but his petition was rejected. He was again committed to prison, and on this occasion he was sent to the "dampest and meanest cell" in the Tower; with instructions from the Council, that none should see him but one of the warders; that "*all his books and papers should be taken from him; and that he should be refused the use of pen, ink, and paper.*"‡ In this deserted and pitiable condition, he continued for the remainder of Edward's reign. Cranmer acted with much duplicity to Gardyner during the

* Lingard, vol. v. p. 310.

† State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

‡ Strype's Cranmer, vol. i.; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. v.; Hume vol. iii.; Lingard, vol. v.

law proceedings in this case. In fact, his whole course was marked by illegality and despotism. Dean Hook states that Cranmer acted according to his honest convictions. But judging by his actions, his convictions often presented a painful contradiction. While in the Tower, Gardynere had ample time to contemplate the result of the fatal facility with which he had lent himself to the unjust divorce of Queen Katherine, thus paving the way to all the confiscations, innovations, devastation, crime, and sorrow which accompanied and followed Henry's divorce from Katharine and from the sacred traditions of his ancestry and people.

Dean Hook admits that Gardynere's conduct throughout the reign of Edward VI. was, on the whole, dignified and praiseworthy.* A candid admission from a steadfast antagonist.

I next approach another indictment against Somerset and his agents for antecedent deeds.

That King Henry, Sir Ralph Sadler, Lord Hertford, and Sir William Paget, were in correspondence with Scotch assassins to make away with Cardinal Beaton, is now fully proved by the State Papers of 1544-5. "The plot," writes Mr. Tytler, "is entirely unknown either to our Scottish or English historians; and *now*, after the lapse of more than three centuries, has been discovered in the secret correspondence of the State Paper Office." It appears that Lord Cassilis had addressed a letter to Maister Ralph Sadler, in which he made an offer "for the killing of the Cardinal, if his Highness, King Henry would have it done, and promise, *when it was done*, a reward." Sadler showed

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 242.

the letter to his friend, Lord Hertford, and the Council of the North, and by them it was transmitted to the King.*

Cassilis' associates, to whom he communicated his purpose, were the Earls of Angus, Glencairn, Marshal, and George Douglas; the assassins requested that Forster, an English prisoner of some note, who could visit Scotland without suspicion, should be sent to Edinburgh to communicate with them on the design for putting a speedy end to Cardinal Beaton. Lord Hertford at once consulted the Privy Council "upon the King's wishes," in this affair, requiring to be informed whether Cassilis's plan for the assassination of the Cardinal, was pleasing to King Henry, and whether Forster should be sent to Scotland. Henry, conveying his wishes through the Privy Council, replied that he desired Forster to *set off immediately*; to the other part of the query, touching the assassination of Cardinal Beaton, the answer of the Privy Council was in these words:—"His Highness hath willed (commanded) us to signify unto your lordship that his Highness considers the fact not meet to be set forward expressly by his Highness, who *will not seem to have to do in it*; and yet not misliking the offer, thinketh good that Maister Sadler, to whom that letter was addressed, should write to the Earl (Cassilis) of the receipt of his letter containing such an offer, which he thinketh not convenient to be communicated to the King's Highness. Marvy to write to him what he thinketh of the matter; he shall say that if he were in Cassilis' place, and were as able to do his Highness good service there, as he

* The Privy Council to Lord Hertford, dated Greenwich, May 30, 1545, relative to the proposition of the Earl of Cassilis for the assassination of Cardinal Beaton: MS. State Paper Office.

knoweth him to be, and thinketh a right good will in him to do it, *he would surely do what he could for the execution of it, believing verily to do thereby not only an acceptable service to the King's Highness, but also a special benefit to the realm of Scotland.*"*

King Henry thus preserved, as he imagined, his regal dignity; and whilst he affected ignorance of the contemplated murder, encouraged, through his Council, its execution, and shifted the responsibility upon the shoulders of his pliant and infamous agents. On both points Henry's commands were obeyed. Maister Sadler wrote to Cassilis in the indirect manner which had been pointed out, and Forster, in compliance with the wishes of the conspirators, was sent into Scotland, and had an interview with Angus, Cassilis, and Sir George Douglas; the substance of which he has given in a report which is still preserved amongst the State Papers. It is evident from the paper to which I have just alluded, that both Angus and Cassilis were deterred from committing themselves to the proposed murder of Cardinal Beaton, by the cautious nature of Sadler's letter to Cassilis, who, in obedience to the royal orders, *had recommended the assassination of the Cardinal, as if from himself*, and had affirmed, though falsely, that he had *not communicated the project to the King*.

The two Earls therefore, said not a word to the envoy on the subject; although Cassilis on his departure entrusted him with a letter in cipher for Maister Sadler. Sir George Douglas was more pronounced in complicity, and sent a message to Lord Hertford in plain terms:—

* The correspondence is set forth at full in Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv.

"If the King wishes the Cardinal dead, the reward should be paid. . . . The common saying is, the Cardinal is the occasion of the war, and is smally beloved in Scotland, and then, if he were killed, by whom would the reward be paid?" Douglas seemed to doubt if his English employers would pay the sum indirectly agreed upon; and he feared they would repudiate "the whole transaction when their turn was successfully served." The crafty Scot took a plain downright view of his employers. Although Henry had no objection to give the utmost secret encouragement to the plot for the murder of Cardinal Beaton, he hesitated to offer such an outrage to the feelings of Christendom, as to set a price upon the Cardinal's head, and promise to reward the murderers. The secret agents in this plot, upon behalf of the English King—who would fain appear to be in ignorance of their movements—were Forster, Sadler, and Lord Hertford. Sadler was by far, however, the most implicated. In one of his letters he states that he is of opinion that to *put the Cardinal out of the way would be an acceptable service to God.*"* This roundabout atrocity fell through, but the plot was quickly resumed by other and more daring hands. Crichton, the Laird of Brunston, a friend of John Knox, organised another plan for the murder of Cardinal Beaton. Men who understood no diplomacy in murder now entered upon the scene; and the assassination of the Cardinal was accomplished in 1546, under circumstances the most revolting.

* Original State Paper never published till printed by Tytler, vol. iv. p. 464; see also State Papers of Scotland, 1545; and likewise the State Papers (domestic) of England, for 1544-5.

I attach much importance to the opinion of Frazer Tytler upon the assassination of Beaton. Mr. Tytler observes: "The assassination of Cardinal Beaton is an event which has been viewed under very different aspects by different parties. The exultation and unseasonable pleasantries with which Knox relates the murder are partly to be ascribed to the savage times in which he was bred, and to the natural temper of this singular man. . . . That Knox considered the deed as not only justifiable, but *almost praiseworthy*, is evident from the whole tone of his narrative. This mode of writing naturally roused to the highest pitch the indignation of the Catholic party, and it was received with equal reprobation by the more moderate Protestants."*

Dr. Mackenzie has no doubt that the assassination of Cardinal Beaton had been planned in England. He corroborates his opinion by a document which he had seen in the Library of the Faculty of Advocates. The document in question was an extract from a letter of Lord Hertford, dated April 17, 1544.†

The murder of Cardinal Beaton created a feeling of horror throughout Europe. The assassination of the aged prelate was the opening chapter in the Scotch Reformation movement. The reader has seen how far Henry VIII., and his brother-in-law, and the English Council were implicated in the murder.‡ It is likewise impossible to

* Frazer Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. iv. p. 454.

† Mackenzie, vol. iii. p. 231. The *original* letter of Lord Hertford concerning the assassination, is at present in the possession of the House of Hamilton, whose ducal-title holder many years ago, permitted Mr. Tytler to take a copy of this "black evidence" against Hertford. The reader will find the letter in its original style, in vol. iv. p. 457, of Tytler's *History of Scotland*.

‡ State Paper Correspondence between King Henry, Lord Hertford, and Sir William Paget; Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. iv.

acquit John Knox of being an active member of the conspiracy to accomplish this crime. Spottiswood, the Scotch Reforming Archbishop, attempts to vindicate Knox's memory in relation to this murder; but he utterly fails. John Knox preached a sermon at the Castle shortly after the assassination, which is traditionally represented as a kind of defence of the assassins. Of this "defence," or "pious discourse," as some Kirk Saints styled it, Archbishop Spottiswood did not approve, for he says, "the good John Knox would have done wiser by staying away." In a letter written about August, 1559, by John Knox, to Sir William Cecil, the former alludes to the correspondence of Henry VIII. as to the murder of Beaton. Mr. Tytler remarks: "Knox, expressing so much, I think, intimates his approval of their conduct, and of Henry's encouragement of them."* Knox too, is accused of having at a later period participated in the brutal and cowardly murder of David Rizzio;† and later, and lastly, counselling on his deathbed the murder of his Queen, in case Elizabeth, as was then in treaty, should deliver up Mary to her felon nobles. Elizabeth, however, preferred retaining the power of assassinating her prisoner, and so the advice of Knox perished with himself. In Miss Strickland's "*Queens of England*," vol. iv. pp. 378-9, will be found an account of John Knox's deathbed admonition to his brother conspirators, in relation to a new scheme for the murder of the Queen of Scots.

* Tytler's *History of Scotland*, vol. v. p. 96.

† In the list of those who were the "special consenting parties" to the murder of Rizzio, stands forth the name of John Knox. The names are appended to Randolph's despatches to Cecil. The "titles and surnames" of the assassins are to be found in the *Historical Proofs* arranged by Tytler, vol. v. p. 501. In the third volume I shall enter into the history of Knox's "early career in life."

There were amongst the English Reformers some men who expressed a sympathy with the assassins of Cardinal Beaton, and in the foremost rank of this class stands the name of John Foxe. The "Martyrologist," took the most blasphemous mode of defending the murderers. He stated "*that the assassins were stirred up by the Lord to murder the Archbishop in his bed.*" The learned Collier comments with very puerile logic on this cowardly murder in these words:—"Does the Lord then *stir up* men to wrest the *sword* out of the magistrate's hand, and execute their private revenge in blood and slaughter? Is a breach of faith, and stabbing a man in his bed an argument of heavenly impulse? Did these men work any miracles in proof of their commission to take away the Cardinal's life, and dispense with the sixth commandment? Nothing of this kind is pretended. Foxe calls it *murder*, and yet says they are *stirred up by the Lord.*"* Archbishop Spottiswood, although hating Cardinal Beaton with all the bitterness of a Calvinist, strongly condemns this barbarous murder; and he adds, "that few of the assassins escaped an extraordinary judgment."†

Mr. Froude's sympathies are stoically expressed in favour of the Scotch assassins: "Maitland, Balcarres, and Kirkaldy, who had assisted at the killing of the Cardinal, were young men passing into *the new era, unshocked with the memories of superstition, and for the most part, with a noble desire for some faith in which they could live as honest men.*"‡ Does Mr. Froude think it fitting that un-

* John Foxe, vol. ii. p. 621.

† Archbishop Spottiswood, vol. i. p. 83.

‡ Froude's History of England, vol. vii. p. 103.

sophisticated searchers after truth should commence their quest by participation in the murder of a helpless ecclesiastic, and one of the few good men of his epoch? If so, verily Mr. Froude's notion of initiative grace and inquiry after truth is amongst the strangest of this age.

Kirkaldy was subsequently hanged by the Kirk Saints of his own party. Strange to say, he fought for Mary Stuart, and his last words were—"Long live Queen Mary." He was a truculent soldier, but about the best man of his party. He died bravely.

I cannot pass over the names and character of a few more of the assassins with whom "the good Lord of Hertford" corresponded, concerning the projected murder. Wishart was everything that John Knox, Cassilis, and Sadler might desire; he took a leading part in the murder. Crichton, the Laird of Brunston, had on a former occasion submitted a plan to King Henry for the assassination of Beaton. Crichton was the friend of Cassilis; Crichton corresponded with the English Council, and specially with Hertford; and it is plain from the "surroundings" of the case, that Cassilis, Crichton, and Sadler had arranged the assassination, but required "other hands" to strike the blow. These hands, however, were slow to act till the "*reward*"—such is the phrase used—was paid. Crichton's correspondence with the English Council places him in an especially odious light. The immense research of Mr. Frazer Tytler amongst the Scotch State Papers of those disastrous times enabled him to form a more correct opinion of the character of this man than perhaps any other writer upon the period. "Crichton, the Laird of Brunston, was a man in whose

character we recognise the ferocity of, and familiarity with, blood, which marks the feudal times in which he lived; the cunning and duplicity which are the growth of a more civilized era, and this, united to a fanatical spirit, which perhaps deceived him into the belief that he was a sincere friend of truth. Busy, unscrupulous and active, this pliant intriguer insinuated himself into the confidence of all parties, and seems to have been willing at various times to desert all, till the money of England fixed him for the powerful choice of self-interest, in the service of Henry VIII. We first meet with him as a familiar and confidential servant of Cardinal Beaton, entrusted with secret letters to Rome, which were intercepted (?) by the English King. He next attached himself to the Earl of Arran, the governor of Scotland, who placed confidence in his honour, and sent him on diplomatic missions to France and England. In a few months he betrayed and deserted Lord Arran; next became acquainted with Sadler, and Sadler's Royal master. Sadler understood the man, and highly recommended him to the King as his secret agent in Scotland. 'He is popular,' writes Ralph Sadler; 'everyone confides in him, yet he is false at bottom, but will do any thing for English gold. I will not trust him too far. I have engaged his kinsman to 'closely watch him.''' Sadler himself was "closely watched" by Paget. The spy system, however, flourished under Sadler.

In April, 1544, Crichton entered into a secret correspondence with King Henry, and offered in a very open manner to procure the assassination of Cardinal Beaton *if necessary*, but on "certain conditions," which, of course, meant "the reward"—the assassin's pay. In one of his early letters he

says, "I shall not fail to fulfil, *so far as God will give me grace.*"* Here is blasphemy with a vengeance.

Upon the return of Mary Queen of Scots from France, Crichton, then in his old age, appeared once more upon the scene. He was one of the party who signed the "treaty"—such was the phrase used—for carrying out the assassination of David Rizzio. His name is attached to the document, and is now amongst a series of papers discovered some years ago. Mr. Tytler has seen and commented upon this black document.

Amongst the military instruments employed by Somerset for "Scouring the Borders" stands prominent the name of Mathew, Earl of Lennox, father of the ill-fated Darnley. Lennox was the most time-serving agent that the Duke of Somerset retained amongst the Scottish nobles. For his services in the war against Scotland, Lennox received considerable augmentations of his northern possessions. He was further enriched by the plunder of the gallant House of Percy. The name of the Earl of Lennox was long remembered in the history and traditions of the Borders—his name written in characters of rapine and carnage. He had drawn upon himself the execration of humanity, not only as a ruthless soldier, but by a deed of blood which makes Nature shudder. Lords Lennox and Wharton commanded in the terrible inroad made in Scotland in September, 1547, and the Protector Somerset wrote to thank them for their good service to the English Government. The "good service" consisted of sacking towns,

* Ralph Sadler's Correspondence, vol. i. p. 242; Tytler's History of Scotland, vol. iv. p. 457.

desecrating churches, *firing hospitals, and murdering helpless women and children.* For this description of work Lord Lennox was liberally rewarded. In one of Lord Lennox's expeditions into Scotland, he forced into his service a body of Scottish horsemen—a kind of "Cossack irregulars," whose children he kept as hostages for the fidelity of their fathers. Those men hated Lennox for his brutal ferocity, and they deserted him at a critical moment. Twelve fine little boys had been, as written, detained prisoners at Carlisle; when Lord Lennox returned to that town after a defeat, fired with evil passions and rage, he immediately informed his military colleague, Lord Wharton, that he would "*hang up at once* the twelve boys then in his custody." Wharton, who had been privy to many dark deeds, revolted at the proposed murder of twelve children, and pleaded earnestly for mercy; Lennox would hear of none. He would have some evidence to prove to his English employer that he deserved the guerdon of a traitor and assassin. Let the reader remember that the Lord Protector Somerset was at that time the patron and friend of this Lennox. *Eleven of the boys were hanged* in the revolting fashion of those times. It may be learned from the memoirs of Lord Herries, that though he was one of this devoted number, he was yet saved, no thanks to Lord Lennox, for the rope had actually been coiled round the boy's neck. He was handsome, and almost a child. The soldier to whom he was handed over to be strangled became sick with the horrors of the scene, and saved the lad at the risk of his own life—for he had acted against the command of his officer, and that officer was Mathew, Earl of Lennox. In subsequent years the boy whom the humane English soldier

refused to slay was known as Maxwell of Herries, one of the chivalrous defenders of Mary Stuart.* Several romantic Border stories have been related of this gallant chieftain.

Many a terrible deed was perpetrated against the Scottish people in the neighbourhood of Carlisle and along the Borders, but this slaughter of eleven innocent children, ranging from five to seven and ten years old, was perhaps the most wicked and detestable. It remained unavenged as far as the eye of man can discover. But long veiled in the obscurity of unedited History as that deed and its subsequent punishment have been, the assertion can safely be made that the retribution was terrible, for Lord Lennox could never afterwards *be left alone*. Solitude inflicted on him agonies which "threatened to terminate in death."†

The shocking incidents here detailed occurred in the reign of Edward VI., when Lennox was comparatively a young man.

The friend and accomplice of Lord Lennox was a staunch Reformer named Maister Tom Bishop; Lennox was a "moveable Papist," whilst his wife, Margaret Douglas was an uncompromising Catholic. "By Rome and its principles I stand to the death," were her words to Sir George Douglas, that "man of blood."

A few words as to "Tom Bishop," the friend of John Knox, and the political associate of Mathew, Earl of Lennox, the "accommodating Catholic." The authoress of the "Queens of Scotland," in her memoir of Lady

* Ridpath's Border History, Holinshed; Herries' Memoirs; Queens of Scotland, vol. ii.; Tytler; Mackenzie.

† State Papers: Letters of Margaret, Countess of Lennox; Queens of Scotland, vol. ii.; Tytler, vol. v.

Lennox, describes Bishop as "a relentless fiend, eager for blood, because he was eager for gain." Here is Tom Bishop's description of himself. He writes in these words to Sir William Cecil:—

"I have been most earnest, most inventive, most cruel, most careful to subvert the realm of Scotland. Let a trumpet be blown on the Marshes, requiring any of that nation, or of France, to come forward and charge me, I seek not Scots to try my daring, but noblemen of England under whom I have served."*

The biographer of the Countess of Lennox thus remarks upon the "reformed associate" of that lady's husband. "True, Lord Lennox was well punished to feel himself in the power of such an accomplice, who, goading him forward to deeds of wickedness, remained in the shade, leaving his most miserable master to endure the obloquy."

Lennox and Bishop acted under the immediate advice of Sir Ralph Sadler, who was Somerset's confidential agent in "overturning society" and destroying life and property in Scotland. All these wicked deeds were committed in the name of the God of mercy and of charity, for Sadler is represented "as a pious, God-fearing man;" but, like his employers, he must be judged by his actions.

To return to the "Home Policy" of Somerset.

"The most questionable of the measures pursued in the reign of Edward VI.," writes Sharon Turner, "in promoting the Reformation, were the suspensions and imprisonments of those bishops who chose to adhere to their ancient form of religion. In these deprivations and in the confinement of Bonner, who held the See of London, and Gardyner, of Winchester, we see, however, an arbi-

* MSS. Harleian—State Papers.

trary and ill-humoured action. Heath and Day, Bishops of Worcester and Chichester, were deprived of their Sees and imprisoned—the first for not acquiescing in the new form of ordination, and the latter for not changing the *altars of his diocese into tables*, and for preaching against the change of religion. There was a spirit of unjust intolerance, and a system of oppressive harshness in these proceedings which, though borrowed from the ancient system in which all had been educated, we cannot now consider without dislike, surprise, and condemnation.”* Mr. Froude, also strongly censures Cranmer for the cruel and unjust mode of his proceedings against his former friend, the Bishop of Winchester.

Mr. Froude very candidly admits the awful state of the country under the government of Somerset. Two Bills were passed in 1547—a few months subsequent to King Henry’s death—to which I wish to call the particular attention of the reader. It is alleged that the vagrancy laws of Henry’s reign had failed, owing to their severity. “Granting,” observes Mr. Froude, “that it was permissible to treat the vagabond as a criminal in an age when transportation did not exist, and when public works, on which he could be employed at the cost of the Government were undertaken but rarely, the question what to do with him in such a capacity was a hard one. The compulsory idleness of a life in gaol was at once expensive and useless; and practically, the choice lay between no punishment at all, *the cart’s tail, and the gallows*. The Protector, Somerset, although his schemes proved a failure, may be excused for having attempted a novel experiment, for having in-

* Sharon Turner’s History of England, vol. x.

vented an arrangement, the worst feature of which was an offensive name, and which, in fact, resembled the system which, till lately, was in general use in our own penal colonies. The object was, if possible, to "utilize the rascal part of the population who were held to have forfeited, if not their lives, yet their liberties.* A servant determinately idle, leaving his work, or an able-bodied vagrant roving the country without means of honest self-support, and without seeking employment, was to be brought before the two nearest magistrates. On proof of the idle living of the said person, he was *to be branded on the breast* where the mark could be concealed by his clothes, with the letter V, and adjudged to some honest neighbour *as a slave, to have and to hold the said slave for the space of two years* following; and to order the said slave as follows:—'That is to say, to take such person adjudged as a *slave* with him, and only giving the said *slave bread and water*, or small drink, and *such refuse of meat* as he shall think proper, to cause the said *slave* to work!' If *mild measures* like these failed, if the *slave* was still idle or ran away he was to be marked on the *cheek or forehead* with an S, and be adjudged a *slave for life*. If finally refractory, then he might be sentenced as a felon. . . . The year before King Henry's death, the remaining property connected with the Church, which was intended for colleges, schools, hospitals, alms-houses, parochial

* The men who are here stigmatised as "rascals and slaves," formed a very large proportion of the small tenants, mechanics, labourers, and servants, who had been connected for generations with the recently broken-up abbeys and convents. They could procure no employment, although they had been long known as an honest and industrious class of people. Towards the close of Henry's reign they were hunted like wolves.

charities, for chantries, Masses for the dead, ornaments for churches, and other useful purposes, were placed by Parliament in the hands of the King to receive such alterations as the change of time required. . . . The preamble of the new Act, more explicit than that of the statute under Henry, stated that in times of superstition, when the *perfect method of salvation was not understood*, when men held vain opinions of Purgatory, and Masses satisfactory, they had established chantries, and such other institutions, thinking to benefit their souls. The funds so applied might be consecrated to good and godly uses. . . . The proposed changes were postponed by Parliament, and an uncontrolled confidence was reposed in the King's Council." Oh! Mr. Froude, why ignore the condition of the "slaves" branded, and unbranded, hanged, whipped, or starved?

"The shrines and the altar-plate of York Cathedral were sent to the Mint, to be issued in base coin; and the example being contagious, parish vestries began to appropriate the chalices, jewels, bells and ornaments in the country churches, and offer them publicly for sale."* Mr. Froude, with his usual delicacy of thought where religion is concerned, describes the wreck of the ancient Church in these words:—"The carcase was cast out into the fields, and the vultures of all breeds and orders flocked to the banquet."† This sentiment seems so impartial an outcome of idiosyncrasy as to deserve preservation.

In order to be more explicit, I summarise the infamous

* Tanner MSS., Bodleian Library.

† Froude's *History of England*, vol. v. pp. 68-70.

statute which was passed by Somerset for the debasement and oppression of the people whom he aided in bringing to slavery and want. Let it also be remembered that the founders of the English Reformation were the very persons who enacted and carried out the barbarous laws put in operation during the reign of Edward VI. "Any man or woman," one of the statutes stated, "found suspiciously near any house, or wandering mysteriously by the highways, or in the streets of any city, town, or village, for three days together, without offering to work for the belly cheer which they required to sustain them, or running away from their labour, may be brought by the master, or any other person, before two squires, who were justices of the peace; and the said justices, having the power of statute law to exercise the said power by *burning into his or her breast with a hot iron the letter V*, and to adjudge him or her to be *the slave of the informer, to have, and to hold the said slave to him*, his executors or assigns, for the space of two years, only giving the said *slave bread and water*." The master was empowered to cause the slave to work by *beating, chaining*, or otherwise, in such work and labour, how vile soever it be, as he should put him unto. If the slave found his service too hard, and ran away or absented himself for fourteen days without his master's leave, the master might "punish the said slave by *chains and beating*, and if he chose to prove the fault by two witnesses before the justices of the peace, the same justices shall cause such slave or loiterer to be marked on the *forehead, or the ball of the cheek with a hot iron*, with the sign of an S, that he may be known for a loiterer and runaway, and shall adjudge the loiterer and runaway to be

the said master's *slave for ever.*" If the slave ran away after these proceedings, he was condemned to death, and *to be hanged from the nearest tree, if violent ;* if otherwise, by the public hangman of the district. Any manner of persons were permitted to take children between five and fourteen years of age from any wayfaring beggar, whether the mother, nurse, or keeper of the child be willing or not. Taken before certain local authorities, they adjudged the child to be the servant or apprentice of him who brought it, if a boy, till he reached the age of nineteen, if a girl, to that of twenty. If the child ran away from his master or mistress once or twice, "then it shall be lawful for every such master to take the said child again ; and to keep and *punish the said child in chains, or otherwise, and use him or her as his slave in all points,* for the time before rehearsed of the age of such child." Section 4 of this law gives permission to the masters of men and women who had been adjudged slaves, or of children who had been adjudged apprentices or servants, the power "*To let, set forth, sell, bequeath, or give* the service of such slaves or servants, to any person or persons, whatsoever. It was declared lawful to any one owning a slave, to put *a ring of iron about his neck, arm, or leg, for a better knowledge* and surety of keeping him. If any person assisted in the removal of one of these creatures without permission of the master, he was to forfeit ten pounds sterling.

Such were the statutes enacted by the Duke of Somerset against the once free and happy people of England, virtuous, honest, and loyal, until compelled by brute force to abandon the creed of their fathers. Under the laws enacted by Somerset and his Council, the masses became

reckless and debased. Starved and half-naked men, women, and children, were to be seen at any part of London; thieving, drunkenness, and immoral practices increased to a lamentable extent; diseases of the most virulent type preyed upon the poor; the hospitals were nearly all broken up, and their property confiscated; the diseased creatures lay down in the streets or the adjacent fields to die. There was no compassion for their sufferings; "the well-to-do" and the powerful seemed to have parted with that sympathy for the poor which once made England famous throughout Europe. The prosperous only "thought of gathering more wealth, and spending it on their own bodies;" they were bent on the enslavement of the people, who, in turn, acquired the ferocity of envious hate, and throwing off all religious control, "entered the ale-houses on Sundays and holy days, and seldom went to church." A few years before, the churches were filled on the Sabbath, and the ale-houses only frequented by the "black sheep" of both sexes. The scene was now changed; the people of the lower ranks—especially women—were most hostile to the "new priests;" the "women swore mightie oaths that, since England was England, they had never before known of the Saviour's priests having wives and children." The people would not go to Paul's Cross to hear the Lord Cranmer or the Lord Ridley preach.* They would sooner go to the ale-house. And go to the ale-house they unfortunately did.† The churches were desecrated daily by bands of

* The commonalty did not style the bishops according to their territorial titles.

† Nathan Wolci on the Condicion of the Common People, in King Edward's reign; Redger Radclyffe on the Condicion of the Countre Parts.

ruffians. "Those who had small sums of money crowded to places of abominable amusement on Sundays; the tide of crime flowed onward. The new preachers could make no impression on the lower classes. Latimer was the only Reformer whom they would hear. He sympathised with their sufferings, and denounced the nobles for having seized so greedily on the property which was for the benefit of the poor.* But Hugh Latimer had no real influence with the people, nor perhaps any one of his party. Gilpin, who may be considered one of the Reformers—and, indeed, one of the very best of them—states that, "in Edward's reign more blind superstition, ignorance, and infidelity were promulgated in England than ever were under the Bishop of Rome. The realm was in danger of becoming more barbarous than Scythia."† Church livings were bestowed on men "who knew not what honesty, virtue, godliness, or Christian charity was. They did not even bear the outward semblance of priests or bishops; they were regarded as dicers, petty thieves, and open robbers, whose only study was to kill and destroy the people committed to their charge."‡ Society became completely rent asunder. Generosity, friendship, and charity received a shock; nay, the very children rose up against their parents; they claimed the liberty of doing as they pleased; they "maltreated their mothers like young brutes."§ Bradford has summed up

* Latimer's Discourses on the Povertie of the People.

† Bernard Gilpin's Sermons on the Crymes of the Realm.

‡ Sermons on Repentance; Holinshed; Stowe; Statutes of the Realm; Latimer's Sermons in London; Records of London Life, from 1547-55 (black-letter, a very scarce little book).

§ Nathan Wolci on the Ungodly Tymes.

the result of the "mightie changes" in Edward's reign :—
"All men may see that *immorality in its foulest forms, pride, dishonesty, unmercifulness, scoffing at religion and virtue, and a desire to oppress and crush down the poor, far surpassed at this time any thing that ever before occurred in the realm.*" *
And, in a letter to Archbishop Cranmer, the same author says :—"A heavy curse seems to have fallen on the people ; I know not what to think of it. Desolation overshadows this land of ours, that was once so prosperous and contented." Such are the words of one of the Reformers of Edward's reign.

Mr. Froude philosophises in eloquent terms on the infirmities of human nature at this disastrous period of England's history. The learned gentleman settles the matter in his own way, and arrives at the extraordinary conclusion that the Reformers possessed whatever goodness or virtue remained in the realm. This assertion is quite opposed to the records of the times. How singularly different is the opinion of several Protestant writers, who lived so many generations nearer the time and men treated of! Camden, Strype, and Burnet, draw by no means a flattering picture of the character and conduct of the early Reformers. The late Dean of Lincoln (Dr. Maitland), who dedicated a long life to the investigation of the records and manuscripts bearing upon the movements of the English Reformers of Edward's reign, has furnished the world with an analysis of their proceedings, which few will question, and none can read with edification, or without conviction.

From Lord Russell down to Sir Anthony Kingston, the

* Bradford on the Condition of Public Morals, and the People's Poverty.

military agents chosen by the Duke of Somerset to promote the Reformation, were men remarkable for evil lives and reckless disdain of the peoples' rights. It would appear that Somerset acted on the advice prescribed for him by Calvin. "As I understand," writes the Geneva Reformer to Somerset, "you have two kinds of mutineers against the King and the estates of the realm; the one are a fantastical people who, under colour of the Gospel, would set all to confusion; the others are stubborn people in the superstition of the Antichrist of Rome. These altogether do deserve to be *well punished by the sword*, seeing they do conspire *against the King and against God*, who had set him in the royal seat." * In another passage of the same letter, Calvin gives a remarkable advice to Somerset. "Of all things," he observes, "let there be *no moderation*. *It is the bane of genuine improvement.*"

It was quite unnecessary to offer this advice to Somerset, or to any one of the men who formed his Council.

To stigmatise the people of Devonshire as rebels, was most unjust, and contrary to fact. They took up arms, not against the Tudor dynasty, but to vindicate the rights of conscience. They claimed the privilege of practising the religion which their forefathers *held for one thousand years*; and this right was denied; *the denial enforced by the sword*—followed by penal proscriptions, previously unknown to Britons, for injustice and barbarous cruelty. Among the demands made by the Devonshire insurgents, was one that the Six Articles should be put in force, and the olden religion maintained. In the eighth demand, they state, "We will

* MS. Domestic, Edward VI., vol. v. (1548). The translation of the above letter is in the handwriting of Archbishop Cranmer.

not receive the new service, because it is but like a Christmas game; but we will have our old Service of Latin Mass, Evening Song, and Procession in Latin, as it was before. And so we the Cornish men, whereof certain of us understand no English, utterly refuse this new English."* But the demands were made in vain. Again, I cannot help remarking, that, judging by the Protector's actions, he adopted something like Calvin's maxim—"moderation is a dangerous thing."† The history of John Calvin's Mission sufficiently explains his idea of "moderation," or "liberty of conscience."

After one of those massacres styled "a battle in Devonshire," Dr. Coverdale preached "an evening thanksgiving sermon," standing over the bodies of the slain, "as," says Mr. Froude, "they lay with their stiffening limbs, and their faces to the stars." There were many such scenes during Lord Russell's campaign. Few, however, of the military commanders employed by the Government of Edward VI. won such an unenviable notoriety as Sir Anthony Kingston, the Provost-Marshal. This Kingston was thoroughly mean, cruel, vindictive, and dishonourable; yet a distinguished writer of the present day says, "He was a young, high-spirited, and, in some respects, noble sort of person—a friend of Hooper, the martyr." Mr. Froude seems very frequently mistaken as to the merits of his heroes. John Ulmis, in one of his Zurich letters, exposes in some measure the character of Kingston. He says, "Anthony Kingston, a man of rank in Gloucestershire, was cited to appear before Bishop Hooper on a charge of adultery and other

* Complaynts of the Cornish Men and Women.

† Dyer's Life of Calvin; Goliffe, tom. iii.

immoral practices. He was severely reprimanded by the bishop, to which he replied with abusive language, and so far forgot himself as to use blows in the Bishop's court. Hooper reported the case to the Privy Council, and Sir Anthony Kingston was fined £500 for his conduct to Bishop Hooper." A strange kind of friend must a man like Kingston have been to Hooper. These charges against Kingston are further corroborated by a recent biographer of Hooper, who certainly should not have been made a martyr in any shape.

In the reign of Queen Mary, Sir Anthony Kingston professed his return to the olden religion, and proved quite ready to act as Provost-Marshall at the execution of any of his former friends. As Provost-Marshall he went to Gloucester to see the "law fulfilled" in the case of Bishop Hooper, and had the malign courage to visit that prelate the night before his death, and begged of him to "consult his own safety and recant." "Consider," said this conscientious adviser, "that life is sweet and death is bitter."* Hooper turned aside and treated his admonition with contempt. Lord Sussex and his Provost-Marshall, in their conduct towards the Northern insurgents in the reign of Elizabeth, were angels of mercy compared to Lord Russell and Kingston. In fact, Russell seemed to delight in carnage like a wild beast. His doings in Devonshire are almost incredible for their profuse bloodthirstiness.† His conduct to the women and children was equally barbarous.

Hooper, who was present at many of Lord Russell's massacres, describes them "as most horrible butcheries of

* Life of Dr. Hooper.

† Records of the Reign of Edward VI.; Military Campaign in Devonshire.

brave men." Holinshed, Stowe, and other writers, confirm this statement. Russell's own business-like despatches to Somerset and the Council present a lamentable picture of the means by which the new ordinances promulgated by the confiscators were promoted in Devonshire and throughout Cornwall. One of the despatches states that prayers "were offered up every morning and evening" in the camp; and another military letter relates "how jolly the soldiers ate and drank," being supplied daily with large numbers of sheep and fowl from the localities where the farmers and squires "forfeited such property by their obstinate adherence to the Popish Mass, and other superstitions condemned by the God-fearing Reformers." Anthony Kingston, like many of his friends and contemporaries, ended his days miserably. Having been charged with secretly abetting treason against Queen Mary, he died at a roadside house on his route to London as a prisoner. He made enemies both of Reformers and Catholics, and in Devonshire his name was universally execrated. He had received from King Henry a considerable share of the monastic plunder.

Bishop Latimer, in his "Royal Sermons," ascribed all the poverty the people were then enduring to the "new order of things." He stated that his "father was a yeoman who lived comfortably, educated his children, served the King, and gave to the poor, on a farm, the rent of which had been increased fourfold since, so that his successor in the farm became a mere pauper in comparison." In another passage of his sermon he boldly gave the Seymours, the Dudleys, and the Pagets his opinion of the men who succeeded the monks as landlords:—"I fully certify you as extortioners, violent oppressors, engrossers of tenements and

lands, through whose covetousness villages decay and fall down; and the King's liege people, for lack of sustenance, are famished and decayed. . . . You landlords, you rent-raisers, I may say, you step-lords, you unnatural lords, you have for your possessions yearly too much!* The farm that was some years back from £20 to £40 by the year, is now charged to tenants at from £50 to £100. . . . Poor men cannot have a living, all kinds of victuals are so dear. I think, verily, that if it thus continue we shall at length be obliged to pay twenty shillings for a pig.† If ye bring it to pass that the yeoman be not able to put their sons to school, ye pluck salvation from the people, and utterly destroy the realm." In another discourse he contrasts the interest taken in the education of the people by the monks and the Reformers. "In those days they (the monks) *helped the scholars. They maintained and gave them living. . . . It is a pitiful thing to see schools so neglected; every true Christian ought to lament the same.* To consider what has been plucked from abbeys, colleges, chantries, it is a marvel that no more is to be bestowed upon this holy office of salvation. . . . Scholars have no exhibition. Very few there be who help poor scholars, or set children to school to learn the Word of God, and make provision for the age to come. It would pity a man's heart to hear what I have of the state of Cambridge. . . . I think there be at this day (1550) one thousand students less than were

* There is now in the British Museum, a MS. on the rental of the abbeys and convents, and the rents levied by the new landlords. According to this paper the rents were raised four times in twelve years. The annual entertainments given by the "monkish landlords," to their tenants also went out of fashion like many other good social customs of Old England.

† Pork was three farthings per pound in London in the days of Wolsey.

within twenty years, and fewer preachers.”* Latimer was regarded with bitter hostility by the landed proprietors of the “new learning;” and may not these utterances have induced the Council of Queen Mary, in whose hands she was but a “cipher and a seal,” to consign the outspoken bishop to the stake? Probably Latimer was more the victim of social or fiscal malice than of religious heresy.

The Rev. Mr. Blunt states that these “comparisons of the time, before and after the destruction of the abbeys, were wrung from Latimer by the bitter contemplation of the result as it stood visible to his eyes.”

Hume admits that the “reforming spirit” of the laity was excited by the prospect of pillaging the secular, as they had already done the regular clergy, and they knew that while the principles of the olden religion prevailed they could not succeed.†

How did the Duke of Somerset and his ready coadjutors influence the conduct of high and low amongst a people whom he compelled to adopt his innovations? and what effect had the boasted dissemination of the “new learning” amongst the laity, nobles, and people? In the second year of Edward’s reign (1549) the condition of public morals in England, it is stated on undeniable Protestant authority, had become horrible. Adultery was a frequent practice amongst those who should have set an example of virtue; so much, indeed, did the crime abound, that the King’s Council contemplated bringing the question before Parliament. The reader now-a-days may set down the social

* Latimer’s Sermons before King Edward VI.

† Hume, vol. iii. (folio ed.) p. 294; Heylin; Godwin’s *Annals*; Collier’s *Ecclesiastical History*.

state of England as being far from exaggerated, when it is remembered that of public morals at this period the picture is drawn by such a hero-worshipper of the "men and women of the Reformation" as John Strype. Strype says,—
*"About this time the nation grew infamous for the crime of adultery. It began among the nobility and better classes, and so spread at length among the inferior sort of people. Noblemen would frequently put away their wives and marry others, if they liked another woman better, or were like to obtain wealth by her. And they would sometimes pretend their former wives to be false to them, and so be divorced, and marry again those whom they might fancy. The first occasion of this seemed to be in the Earl of Northampton divorcing himself from his first wife Anne, daughter of the Earl of Essex, and afterwards marrying Elizabeth, daughter of the Lord Cobham. In like manner, Henry, son of William, Earl of Pembroke, put away Catharine, daughter of Henry, Duke of Suffolk, and married Mary, daughter of Sir Henry Sydney. These adulteries and divorces increased very much; yea, and marrying again without any divorce at all, it became a great scandal to the realm, and to the religion professed in it. This state of morals gave much sorrow and trouble to good men to see it, in so much that they thought necessary to move for an Act of Parliament to punish adultery with death. This Latimer, in a sermon preached in the year 1550, signified to the King: 'For the love of God, take an order for marriage here in England.'"**
Camden, the distinguished secretary of Sir William Cecil

* Strype's Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer, vol. i., pp. 293, 294. Another evidence of the potency of example in high places.

whose information upon this period was principally derived from Cecil himself, states that "Sacriligious avarice ravenously invaded Church livings, colleges, chantries, *hospitals and places dedicated to the poor, as things superfluous.* Ambition and emulation among the nobility, presumption and disobedience among the common people, grew so extravagant, that England seemed to be in a downright frenzy." *

Things must, indeed, have been in a terrible plight when Burnet is compelled by the power of truth to make the following acknowledgment of the moral and social plague which had been introduced by the leading Reformers. "This gross and insatiable scramble," Burnet observes, "after the goods and wealth that had been *dedicated to good designs, without applying any part of it to promote the good of the Gospel, and the instruction of the poor,* made all people conclude that it was *for robbery, and not for reformation* that their zeal made them so active. *The irregular and immoral lives of many of the professors of the Gospel gave their enemies great advantage to say that they ran away from confession, penance, fasting, and prayer, only to be under no restraint, and to indulge themselves in a licentious and dissolute course of life. By these things, that were but too visible in some of the most eminent among them,* the people were much alienated from them; and as much as they were formerly against Popery, they grew to have kinder thoughts of it, and to look on all the changes that had been made as designs to *enrich some vicious characters, and to let in an inundation of vice and wickedness upon the nation.*" †

* Camden's Chronicle on Edward's reign.

† Burnet's History of the Reformation, first edition.

Dr. Ridley, when Bishop of London (1548), wrote a book entitled, "The Lamentations of England," in which a dreadful picture is drawn of immorality, abominable crimes, oppression, pride, hatred, and scorn of religion and its ministers amongst the people, especially the upper classes. Archbishop Cranmer preached at Paul's Cross an exhaustive sermon on the same subject, but the populace would not hear him; they scoffed at his discourse. Under any circumstances, Cranmer was never popular in London. His manner of addressing the people was cold and repulsive. During this discourse he was frequently interrupted by gross remarks upon his wife. Let it be remembered, however, that a bishop's wife was "a domestic novelty" that all classes objected to in those times. The hostility against such a matron was intense. The homely style and vulgar wit of Latimer gained him a warm reception at Paul's Cross from "the idle spectators;" but, as I have already remarked, he possessed not the power of turning them from the "error of their way." In fact, the lower classes of London became thoroughly debased and reckless. They were, it is true, in a state of poverty quite unknown to their fathers. Hence the cause of the Communistic feeling which sprang into existence for a time, and equally destructive of the interests of religion and the State.

Such was the condition of once happy England, after two years' rule under the great lay Reformer, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset, whose death, Miss Strickland states, "all Protestants deeply lamented as the *real founder* of the Church of England." * In fine, it may with truth be said that the iron had entered the soul of England—nay, even

* *Queens of England*, vol. iii. p. 287. *Ex fractibus judicatur!*

that so abject had become the people in Henry's reign, and during the profligate and relentless rule of Somerset and Northumberland, that, like the debased slaves of an Eastern clime, they were brought almost to admire the tyrants by whom they were oppressed, plundered, and degraded !

It must now be admitted that the change of religion upon the accession of the Boy-King was forced upon the country by German soldiers whose conduct has been described by contemporaries as "revolting to a degree."* Hallam, our "Great Protestant Constitutional Historian," contends "that in the remote counties of England the people had a great reverence for the Pope as the Head of their religion. They looked up also to their own teachers (priests) as guides in faith. The main body of the clergy were very reluctant to tear themselves at the pleasure of a disappointed monarch from the bosom of their *Church*."† Burnet admits that it *was* "*necessary to call in foreign troops on account of the obstinacy with which the bulk of the nation still adhered to the old superstition.*" A marvellous admission from Gilbert Burnet.

* Hallam's Constitutional History of England.

† State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

CHAPTER XIV.

DR. CRANMER'S RÔLE IN THE REIGN OF EDWARD VI.

DR. CRANMER appeared at the beginning of young King Edward's reign in a new character.* One of his first public actions at this period was his appearance in the dual capacity of Papal and anti-Papal Archbishop at the Coronation, celebrating Mass—High Mass—and other ceremonies of the Catholic Church. Here is a description of the ceremony, as presided over by his Grace of Canterbury :—

“The procession from the Tower to the Palace of Westminster was one of the most magnificent description. None of the vestments of the clergy were set aside. The suffragans of Canterbury, all mitred, and in rich copes, walked two and two, attended by their apparitors and chaplains, preceding Archbishop Cranmer, who walked alone. Over his scarlet rochet, Cranmer wore an embroidered cope, the train of which was borne by gentlemen of his household; the mitre upon his head was resplendent with jewels; before him was borne erect his crozier, the cross of Canterbury. At the Abbey door they were met by the clergy of the Cathedral, with the members and children of their choir, and those of the Chapel Royal, then as now, arrayed in scarlet tunics beneath their surplices or albs.”

A quaint writer of a briefly later day, says :—

“First there was a goodly stage richly hanged with cloth of gold

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 224.

and cloth of arras, and the steps from the choir contained two-and-twenty steps of height, and down to the high altar but fifteen steps, goodly carpeted, where the King's grace should tread with his nobles. Secondly—The high altar richly garnished with divers and costly jewels and ornaments of much estimation and value; and also the tombs on each side of the high altar, richly hanged with fine gold and arras. Thirdly—In the midst of the stage was a goodly thing made of seven steps in height, where the King's Majesty's chair-royal stood; and he sat therein after he was crowned all the Mass while. Fourthly—At nine of the clock all Westminster choir was in their copes and three goodly crosses borne before them, and after them other three goodly rich crosses, and the King's chaplain, with his children following, all in scarlet, with surplices and copes on their backs; and after them ten bishops in scarlet, with their rochets and rich copes on their backs, and their mitres on their heads, did set forth at the west door of Westminster, towards the King's palace, there to receive his Grace and my lord of Canterbury (Cranmer), with his cross before him alone, and his mitre on his head.*

When the homage was done, Archbishop Cranmer ascending the great altar, sang the Mass of the Holy Ghost, the choir accompanying him, and the organs playing. After the elevation of the Host, the Archbishop paused, and the Lord Chancellor read a general pardon granted by King Henry VIII. to all who had offended before the 28th of January.† The address, not a sermon, delivered by Cranmer on this occasion, was singularly antagonistic to the principles supposed to be held by an Archbishop who had just "sung the High Mass, and anointed the young monarch." Perhaps Strype may be considered the most "Protestant authority" on this subject. At page 144 of

* Strype's *Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer*.

† *State Papers of Henry's reign*.

Strype's "Cranmer," the Archbishop addressing the King says:—

"These solemn rites serve to admonish you of the duties which you have to perform as God's vicegerent and Christ's vicar (a boy not ten years old), to see that God be worshipped and idolatry destroyed; that *the tyranny of the Bishop of Rome be banished, and images removed.*"

The Archbishop next recommended the study of virtue, morality, and charity; to relieve the poor, to repress violence, and execute justice! The puzzled mind of a conscientious inquirer stops short at this seemingly impassable barrier. So Cranmer was within one hour a Papal Catholic and a Puritan—an "idol-reverer and an iconoclast." A world of inconsistency was compressed within the compass of those altar steps, on which he swore by his words to a testimony which he afterwards proved to be perjury by his actions. If he had been consistent, we might not be called upon to recollect that, whilst a prisoner in the Tower some seven years later, he wrote a memorable letter to the Dean and Chapter of Canterbury, denouncing as the invention of the "Father of Lies" the very Mass which he sang, with so much display, at the coronation of King Edward. It is said that Cranmer was *not* a Protestant at this period; and Dean Hook wishes to impress on his readers that "although at the accession of King Edward the Archbishop was a Reformer he was not even yet *a Protestant.*" And the learned Dean again observes, "The question may indeed fairly be asked whether in the modern acceptance of the term *a Protestant he ever became.*" Dean Hook admits that, "for Cranmer's own character as a public man, it was

a misfortune that he was appointed to the Primacy.”* In the same page the learned Dean contends that his appointment “was a blessing for the Church of England.” And again, in another passage, the Dean admits the fact, that the appointment of Cranmer to the See of Canterbury was far from being popular. The latter sentence merely echoes the opinions of Cranmer’s lay and clerical contemporaries.

Although Archbishop Cranmer did so much to promote the Reformation in the reign of Edward, Somerset, the layman, was a far more advanced Protestant than the prelate. The Protector had certainly more material reasons for his conversion, and on this account may not have been even as conscientious as his coadjutor. Cranmer still adhered, with some modifications, to the Papal doctrine on purgatory, prayers for the dead, &c., and on several occasions offered up Mass for the repose of the souls of Henry VIII. and Francis I.†

The reader is aware of the part taken by the Archbishop during the funeral obsequies of Queen Jane. He made himself remarkable on that occasion, eliciting the praise of the King for the “interest he took in the eternal repose of the Queen’s soul.” *He celebrated no less than forty Masses himself for the Queen, for which he received the usual royal offering in gold and silver.*

I cannot pass over an anecdote of Thorndale’s bearing on the incident to which I have just referred,—“It is a curious fact,” he observes, “that King Henry was most

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 136. † Ibid, p. 226.

anxious that many Masses should be offered up for the health of Queen Jane's soul. And offerings to Dr. Cranmer and the clergy for the divers prayers were punctually paid by the King's treasurer. King Henry was always very free-handed in paying for prayers for the dead."

By one section of Cranmer's ecclesiastical code he inflicted a fine of ten shillings and ten days' imprisonment on those who *did not abstain from meat on Fridays and Saturdays, and the eves of Saints' days, also in Advent and Lent.* He likewise held that the presence of images of saints in the churches was "*a constant sermon to the eyes of the ignorant and unlettered.*"* This opinion was propounded more forcibly by Luther, even after his change. But then Luther put forth no settled code of faith. He was a seceder, without being an organizer. The alterations he made have been enlarged by his so-called followers, and the area may be widened to the end of time. The opinions expressed in many instances by Cranmer and Luther are those promulgated by the Council of Trent.

The more we recur to the policy and conduct of Cranmer in the reign of Henry VIII., the more marvel arises at the reputation which has been accorded to his character. As the reader is aware, in 1537 a book was compiled by King Henry's command, entitled "*The Bishop's Book,*" which was arranged by a Council of Prelates, presided over by Archbishop Cranmer, at Lambeth Palace. In this work the Archbishop himself contends for the Sacrament of Penance, and the necessity of Auricular Confession; and, further, he directs the bishops and clergy to "*enforce the*

* Strype's *Memorials of Cranmer*; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

same, in their respective dioceses.”* He was at this time the colleague and friend of Lord Crumwell.

In the reign of Edward VI. Cranmer published a catechism for the “Goodlie Benefit, Profit, and Instruction of Children and Young People.” It is rather a remarkable document. It admits therein the veneration of the Cross, and the reverence to the images of saints as reminders of the virtues of those who were therein represented to “teache them good lyves;” of the prohibition of false gods and of idols, as retained from the Hebrew dispensation—and showing the difference existing between the Jewish and Christian Law. The catechism also taught that in the communion “the body and blood of Christ are received with the ‘bodily mouth;’” inculcates in strong terms the advantages of “confession and absolution,” and attributes the origin of ecclesiastical jurisdiction to Christ the Redeemer, in a mode which appears subversive of his former opinion on the same subject. These facts have been chronicled by Burnet and Collier.†

But enough of the miserable inconsistency of this prelate; from whose writings, in fact, a man can as easily approve one observance as another. Dean Hook admits that the Archbishop had no theological principle to guide him in his preparation for future reforms; but that the “marriage of the clergy was a measure nearest to his heart.” Of course it was.

The research of the Rev. Dr. Brewer amongst the State

* Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. v.; Heylin; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

† Burnet, vol. ii. p. 71; Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. v. p. 254.

Papers and records of the sixteenth century, presents Cranmer's " exertions for the marriage of the clergy," in an unpopular light. " A married clergyman," he says, " was of rare occurrence, either in England or Ireland, in the sixteenth century. The people had not yet lost the notion, with which they had long been familiarized, that the celibacy of the clergy was indispensable to their sacred functions." * In the reign of Elizabeth concubinage was frequent amongst the Reformed clergy, partly, it is alleged, " owing to the want of sufficient means to marry, or a fear of the Queen's resentment, who would not permit a priest to marry." †

In Edward's reign, Archbishop Cranmer and his colleagues were frequently embarrassed by the Reforming clergy preaching the revolutionary opinions which they themselves secretly encouraged in the former reign. They had now to contend against doctrines which could not fail to sap the foundations of society, and perhaps overthrow the monarchy itself. Some of the preachers told the people that a prohibition of bigamy was a pure Popish invention ; that it was " right lawful " for any man, if he thought proper, to have one or two wives, and for the wife to have one or more husbands, if she so wished. Other preachers declared that to admit the government of a King was to *reject the laws of God* ; that children baptized in infancy should be afterwards re-baptized ; that "*Roman laws were not to be obeyed* ;" that no Christian ought to bear any office in the commonwealth ; that *oaths are unlawful* ; that

* See Brewer's State Papers on this subject.

† Domestic State Papers of Elizabeth's reign ; Cecil's Report on the Condition of the Reformed Clergy.

Christ did not take flesh of the Virgin ; that sinners cannot be restored to grace by repentance ; and that all things, *all property, are, and ought to be, in common use.**

Cranmer, assisted by Ridley, Latimer, and Coverdale, sat on a Commission to investigate and punish those who erred against the principles laid down by himself and Poyntet in the newly prepared book of Common Prayer. Henry Champneys, a "reformed priest," was the first offender brought before the Commissioners. He maintained that Christ was not God ; that grace was inadmissible, and that the regenerate, though they might fall by the outward, could never sin by the inward, man. Puttow, a tanner, Jacob Thumb, a butcher, and a priest named Aston, who had embraced Unitarianism, stood condemned by Archbishop Cranmer ; but the terror of the stake induced them to abjure their opinions. They were sworn before the Commissioners to "abandon such wicked doctrines, and condemned to stand publicly at St. Paul's Cross during a sermon, with faggots in hand, which were to light the fire around their corrupt bodies in Smithfield."

The most remarkable person tried for heresy at this time was Anne Boucher, a young lady of considerable talent and personal attractions. She had been an active co-partner of Anne Askew in distributing prohibited books, some few years before, to the ladies of the Court. Her clerical judges were Latimer and Cranmer. One of the principal charges against Anne Boucher was that of maintaining that "Christ did not take flesh of the outward man of the

* State Papers, Edward VI. ; Strype, vol. ii. pp. 12, 98 ; Rymmer xv. pp. 181, 250.

Virgin, because the outward man was conceived in sin, but by the consent of the inward man, which was undefiled." She held many other unintelligible opinions. It was evident that she had lost her reason, but Cranmer did not inquire into her insanity, and excommunicated her as an "obstinate heretic." It therefore remained for the King to order her execution at the stake. When receiving judgment, Anne Boucher addressed Archbishop Cranmer in the following words:—

"My Lord of Canterbury, it is a good matter to consider your ignorance. It was not long ago that *you yourself* burnt Anne Askew for a piece of bread; and yet came yourself soon afterwards to believe and profess the same doctrine for which you burnt her; and now, forsooth, you will needs burn me for a piece of flesh, and in the end will come to believe this also, when you have read the Scriptures and understand them." *

All the mad theories of this poor young lady, and many others, arose from promiscuous reading of the Scriptures by the weak-minded or ignorant.

Anne Boucher's execution was delayed for nearly one year, before King Edward consented to send her to the stake. Like his father, he had the vanity to assume the character of a theologian. He had a "compassion for the future condition of her soul, if she died holding those heretical opinions, that she would be consigned to everlasting torments." On these grounds he refused his assent. Cranmer, however, was determined that his own judgment should be carried out. He argued the question with the King. He showed the "expediency of maintaining the

* See Strype's *Memorials of Cranmer*; Collier, vol. vi.; Lingard, vol. v.; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

spiritual supremacy of the Crown ;” he cited examples from Scripture, producing that of Moses, who had condemned blasphemers to be stoned to death.* Young Edward, who was an ardent admirer of Moses, was soon brought to his Primate’s views of the question. Still he hesitated, and is reported to have “*shed tears on signing the warrant to burn the poor maiden alive.*” When Cranmer further impressed upon the King the necessity of the execution, Edward said :—“*Then let the responsibility of this action rest on thee, my Lord of Canterbury.*”† Another version of the monarch’s address to his Lord Primate, states that he told the Archbishop that he should *charge him to answer before God Almighty*, for what was done.”‡ Pierre Derangie states that all present were struck with the solemn tone in which the young King addressed the Archbishop.

In striking relation to the above scene there was displayed on the walls of the Royal Academy, on its opening in May, 1879—a picture (220) by the eminent painter, Bettie, representing the details of this historical incident. This fine production was, by the London daily press, accorded the place of honour in the large gallery. It is entitled “The Death Warrant ;” and is conspicuous, even at a glance, for the extraordinary power revealed in every detail of the composition. It portrays the figures in massive relief, with a strength of colour perfectly marvellous.

* Collier vol. v. ; Burnet, vol. i. ; Lingard, vol. v. ; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii.

† See King Edward’s Journal ; Tytler’s Edward and Mary ; State Papers of Edward’s reign.

‡ Collier’s Ecclesiastical History, vol. v. p. 375 ; Heyward’s Life of Edward VI.

With similar comprehensiveness and aptitude the grim prose story is told in painted verse, and, at the same time, with singular intelligence and simplicity. The "counterfeit presentment" of the chief incitator of the Boy-King's unwilling signature should have been the foremost amongst the "Councillors," displaying the austere visage of one impressing the dark and baleful monition of a relentless adviser. But, of course, painters cannot be researchful historians as well as great artists. It is fortunate, however, that one of the greatest of English painters had anticipated the advice of Lord Beaconsfield, at a dinner of the Royal Academy, in which he exhorted the possessors of exalted pictorial talents to turn their mind to the grand phases of English history, especially distinguishing for their essays the "Wars of the Roses," unequalled in any land for their incidents and results. Of the picture referred to, the well-known art-critic of a leading daily journal has written :—

"The incident described is that of the Boy-King (Edward VI.) sitting in Council, being forced by his Ministers to seal the doom of some prisoner of State (Anne Boucher); and the contrast is very powerful between the stern and sombre visages surrounding the Council table, and the pale and wistful face of the young Sovereign, whose eyes are filled with vague apprehension, pity, and fear. A rose that he has pulled to pieces in his shrinking irresolution, lies at the foot of his ermine robe. The picture is a masterpiece throughout; the smallest details of it—the collars and jewels worn by the Ministers—the very ink-bottle on the Council table—show the thoroughness with which this *tour de force* has been attempted and achieved."

I hope the reader will pardon a digression in which I merely sought the aid of the more graceful and expressive Muse to assist her sterner sister of History, and beautify

and confirm her facts. As the immortality of Homer's heroes has been maintained by the marble impersonations of Greek sculpture—as the conquests of Alexander have been eternised by the quaint and original text of Arrian—as the “Anabasis” and “Cyropædia” of Xenophon have been rendered as perennial as the works of Herodotus, Tacitus, Livy, and other ancient writers, so it is cheering to see Pictorial Art coming to aid the Pen in the grand feat of delineating man and his actions in times long subsequent and infinitely less heroic.

A few words more as to the sad story of the beautiful Anne Boucher. The newly-appointed Bishops of Ely and London made an attempt to change her opinions, but in vain. She professed to know more of the question at issue “than all the Reformers in the realm.” A contemporary says—“Her conduct at the stake was remarkable for heroic courage; she did not seem mad or out of her wits, but appears to have been a self-willed, vain, and fanatical young woman, who studied learning beyond her comprehension. Her execution presented a horrible scene. The poor creature suffered dreadfully.” Scory, one of the new preachers, undertook to refute her religious notions at the stake, as was then the custom; but she briefly replied, that “he lied like a rogue, and had better go home and study the Scripture.”* Such scenes were frequent in those times.

Several of Cranmer's early biographers—perhaps under the inspiration of Maister Foxe—contend that he had

* See Wilkins Corr. I. v. 42, 43; State Papers (Domestic) of Edward's reign.

nothing whatever to do with the condemnation and execution of Anne Boucher. Strype alleges that Archbishop Cranmer "was *not* present at her condemnation ;" and infers that he was probably no party to it.* But then, as Cranmer was Metropolitan, the prosecution for heresy could not take place without his sanction. On religious or political questions the Archbishop held the highest position in the Council. The best answer to Cranmer's advocates in this case is to be found in fol. 74-75 of the Archbishop of Canterbury's own Register, which states that "he (Cranmer) *was present, and pronounced the judgment against the said Anne Boucher.*" Oldmixon and Rapin, ultra-Protestant historians, censure Archbishop Cranmer for the cruel sentence he passed on "unruly fanatics" in Edward's reign. "How strong was the scent after blood," writes Oldmixon. And again :—"It is astonishing that the Archbishop could imagine such reasons as he made use of carried the least weight with them in Gospel scales."† Rapin and Echard also condemn Cranmer for the part he took in sending Anne Boucher to the stake.

Another ultra-Protestant, and the biographer of Lord Burleigh, writing some fifty years ago, states as his conviction that the character of Dr. Cranmer will never be cleared from the imputation of great cruelty and intolerance in the executions of Anne Boucher and the Dutchman, Van Parris ; and especially, for *over-ruling the more tender emotions of his youthful sovereign, King Edward.*‡

* Strype's Memorials of Dr. Cranmer, vol. i. p. 473.

† Oldmixon's History of England, vol. i. p. 186.

‡ Dr. Nare's Life of Lord Burleigh, vol. i. p. 773. I also refer the reader to Wilkins (copied from the register), vol. iv. pp. 39, 45 ; and Burnet, vol. v. p. 246 (edited by Pocock), for a further inquiry into the case of Anne Boucher.

What explanation will our new champions for Cranmer's policy offer in this case?

Here is the opinion of one of the latest investigators of Cranmer's persecuting policy in Edward's reign:—"In the case of Anne Boucher," writes Dean Hook, "the Archbishop of Canterbury *was the judge who sentenced her to death, and, so far from being ashamed of it, the whole process, together with others of the same kind, ranging over four years from 1548 to 1552 is narrated in Cranmer's own Register.*"* These are unanswerable refutations of the falsehood of Foxe and his imitators down to the present day. In the Commission for the trial of Anne Boucher, I find the name of Hugh Latimer, as well as that of "Thomas, by *divine permission*, Archbishop of Canterbury and Metropolitan of England."

In Canterbury, Cranmer inflicted a barbarous punishment upon a wretched being of whom he complained to the Privy Council. The offence was that of having forged a letter to obtain the office of "headsman" to the City of Canterbury. The Council ordered the Archbishop to cause one of the criminal's *ears to be nailed to the pillory* on the next market-day, and for the said criminal to remain in that situation during the time the said market was held, with a paper declaring his offence in large letters placed on the front of his head. The Archbishop of Canterbury *obeyed the order.**

It is with evident reluctance that Dean Hook utters one sentence to disparage Cranmer; yet the Dean's exalted

* Cranmer's Register, fol. 74; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 69.

† Proceedings of Privy Council, fol. 117, 118

sense of truth, compels him to declare that the Archbishop "was not in advance of his age, for he (Cranmer) thought that a *heretic* was as much deserving of death as a felon."^{*}

In the face of these well-authenticated statements many of Cranmer's advocates consider that "he was not vindictive nor evil-minded, but *rather kind-hearted*."

Von Parris, a Dutch doctor, who denied the Divinity of Christ, was also put to death by Cranmer. His judges were Cranmer, Ridley, and Coverdale. In this case Cranmer likewise gave judgment, and in a few days Parris was committed to the flames.† Many fanatical persons were banished, and others tortured. Several of the accused on this occasion were merely dangerous lunatics.

The lower classes who declaimed in their own rude fashion against the suppression of their "Latin Mass" were hunted down by foreign mercenaries, or silenced by the stocks, or the lash, whilst the prelacy and the educated laity who adhered to the olden faith were consigned to the Tower, or the Fleet, with an order from the Archbishop of Canterbury to the gaolers that they were to have "neither pen, ink, nor paper, and no visitors, save the warder." It has been repeatedly asserted that Cranmer's spiritual labours in Edward's reign were those of a "Primitive Apostle," who was filled with all the beatitudes, and abhorred persecution. Let the reader cast an unprejudiced eye over the pages of this history, and consider the character of the witnesses and authorities produced, and then draw his own conclusions.

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 294.

† See *Wilkins' Corr.*, vol. ii. pp. 44, 45; *Stowe*, p. 606; *Edwards' Journal*, p. 24; *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii.

The question may be asked, Could Archbishop Cranmer in any way prevent the peculations so notoriously carried on by King Edward's Government. He was a leading member of the Council; and I have sought in vain amongst the "Minutes and Records" of that period for any remonstrance or protest from the Archbishop of Canterbury against proceedings that have covered with odium and contempt the memory of every member of that body. Hume indignantly denounces them as "plunderers who neglected not even smaller things." But the meanest of their actions was that of stripping the gold, silver, and other ornaments off the missals and learned books in public libraries. The pretext for so doing was, that those books "were filled with Popish superstitions," upon which Hume has aptly remarked that the "finery" about the books perhaps contained *the* "superstition." In 1551 an order was issued by the King's Council for "purging the library of Westminster of all missals, legends, and other superstitious books," and "delivering over their ornamentations" to Sir Anthony Archer. A large number of those books were plated with gold and silver of the most ingenious Venetian workmanship.* In Oxford library every ornament worth anything was carried away; as to rare or learned books, they were considered of no value at all: books and manuscripts were destroyed without distinction.† The "volumes of divinity," says Hume, "suffered for their rich binding, and those of literature were condemned as useless." Let it be remembered that those deeds of Vandalism were not perpetrated

* Collier, vol. vi.; also the Council Book of Entries.

† Wood's *Hist. and Antiq. of Oxon.* lib. i. pp. 271, 272; Hume, vol. iii. (fol. ed.) p. 334.

by ignorant people, or fanatical mobs, but by order of the King's Council, composed of such men as the Earl of Warwick, Sir William Paget, Archbishop Cranmer, and Chancellor Riche. "It cannot be denied," writes Dean Hook, "that by the precedent set through Cranmer's timid concessions to the civil power, he bequeathed to us an ecclesiastical atmosphere so charged with Erastianism as to render it difficult at certain times to extricate the religious from the political element. In doctrine, Cranmer drifted from Erasmus towards Luther; but a Lutheran he never became; he is described in a Lutheran publication of the present day, as having lacked the central living principle of justification by faith only, and a clear perception of other gospel truths."*

"Unfortunately for the Church and the realm," observes Dean Hook, "Canonical principles together with Zwinglicanism, were found to be more prevalent in England among the learned few than was expected or desired. Men at the head of affairs, like Somerset and Cranmer, had found *no definite principles of their own, and were easily moved by every wind of strange doctrine*. Not content with the verdict of learned Englishmen, they invited to this country foreign teachers, who, although they did not agree amongst themselves, were accustomed to find fault with everything, and they too soon taught our people to join them in assailing the Book of Common Prayer. It was contrary to the policy of some of the leading statesmen to permit the Reformation to be conducted quietly and peace-

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 418; *Bamberger's Protestant Encyclopædia*.

ably. *It was by the quarrels of Churchmen that they preferred to obtain possession of the property of the Church, and in a desire to have a scramble, the lower orders united with them.*"*

Very candid admissions on the part of a fervid advocate of Cranmer and his coadjutors. Let the reader, however, remember that amongst the foremost in the "*scramble*" for the Church lands was the great lay Reformer, Edward Duke of Somerset, to whom, as I have already quoted, Miss Strickland ascribes the primal honour of establishing the Protestant Church of England.

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 87.

CHAPTER XV.

THE PRINCESS ELIZABETH.

THE attention of Somerset and his Council was suddenly turned to the mysterious rumours afloat respecting the Princess Elizabeth and Sir Thomas Seymour. Katharine Ashley, the governess to the Princess, in one of her depositions before the Council, stated her conviction that had Henry VIII. lived, he would have given Elizabeth in marriage to Thomas Seymour. Leti, in his history of those transactions, gives the correspondence which passed between the Princess and Thomas Seymour a few weeks after Henry's death. Elizabeth was then only fourteen, and must have been more terrified than rejoiced, when Seymour asked her "at once to marry him." The "frightened fawn" trembled at the contemplation of so serious an engagement, and in her refusal informs her lover "that she has neither the years nor the inclination to think of marriage at present, and that she would not have any one to imagine that such a subject had ever been mentioned to her at a time when she ought to be wholly taken up in weeping for the death of the King, her father, to whom she owed so many obligations, and that she intended to devote at least two years to mourning for her late father, and sorrowing for his loss; and that even when she shall have arrived at

years of maidenly sense, she wishes to retain her liberty, without entering into any matrimonial engagement."* A very sensible statement from a girl of fourteen years old.

Great as the prize appeared then, and immeasurably greater as it proved to be, Seymour's rejection by the Princess seemed far from breaking his heart. He soon transferred his addresses to the still blooming Catharine Parr, whom her last perilous venture in marriage did not deter from accepting a fourth husband, and within a few weeks of Elizabeth's refusal, the Dowager Queen and the Lord Admiral, as Seymour was styled, were married. In "high circles" this marriage was the subject of censure. In the first instance, the nobility did not approve of the late King's last espousal, and they were indignant at the "short widowhood" of the Queen; besides, the name of Seymour was hateful to the members of both Houses of Parliament, and the laity in general.

The known Protestantism of Seymour's bride caused the Council to place young Elizabeth under her guardianship. But the Council were deceived in their estimate of her prudence. "The demure Catharine actually held the Princess Elizabeth in the garden, at Hanworth, while Seymour cut her black cloth dress into a hundred pieces, and when Mrs. Ashley came up and chid Elizabeth, she answered, 'she could not strive with all, for the Queen held her while the Lord Admiral cut her cloths.' At another time, Elizabeth heard the master-key unlock, and knowing my Lord Admiral would come in, ran out of her bed to her young maidens,

* Correspondence between the Ladye Elizabeth and the Lord Admiral, modernised and summarised.

and then went behind the curtain of her bed, and my lord tarried a long time in hopes she would come out. Mrs. Ashley could not tell how long."* The governess of Elizabeth having heard stories of other flirtations with a young page, reproved her in rather harsh words. "Elizabeth wept bitterly, and assured Mrs. Ashley that those tales, like many others, were quite untrue." Very possible.

It is necessary that the reader should understand that the Court dames of those times indulged in a system of "romping," not very becoming in ladies; and they dealt largely in scandalous gossip of one another; swearing and gross language were also frequent at Henry's Court, when Katharine of Arragon and Anna Boleyn retired from the scene. The upper classes in Edward's reign were remarkable for the hypocrisy of their religious professions, and their disregard of all moral restraint.† The Princess Elizabeth was placed under the guardianship of persons who had small regard for the "proprieties;" Admiral Seymour and his wife proved by their conduct that they were not fit guardians for the young Princess.

The Throckmorton MSS. pretty clearly show that at an early age Elizabeth "swore like a dicer."

In case Seymour's projects respecting Elizabeth failed, he intended to marry Lady Jane Gray, which proves that he contemplated an alliance with royalty at any hazard.‡

On the occasion of the Seymour scandals, Elizabeth wrote

* Haynes' State Papers; Ellis's Royal Letters; Tytler's Edward and Mary; Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. v.; Lingard, vol. v.

See Camden, Strype, Burnet, Pomeroy, and Gilpin, on the condition of society in Edward's reign.

‡ Sir Harris Nicolas's Memorials of Jane Gray, p. 18.

a letter to the Protector Somerset demanding an investigation into her character. The concluding passage in this State Paper proclaims the challenge of indignant virtue :—

“Maister Tyrwhitt and others have told me, that there goeth rumours abroad which be greatly against both my honour and my chastity. I desire to see the King's Majesty, as to the words affecting my virtue. None but the guilty shrink from investigation. I demand an immediate inquiry as to the charges touching my character as a virgin, which are dearer to me than life itself.” *

That the young Princess entertained some affection for Thomas Seymour is beyond doubt; but there is not the slightest proof of any criminality. At this time Elizabeth manifested the qualities of a good-natured and warm-hearted girl, who was not, however, it is true, indifferent to the admiration of her handsome page Fernando Aubrey.† Party spirit at this period construed every action of the Princess Elizabeth in the worst sense. Let it be remembered that the faction who were plotting against Elizabeth were the “Reformers *then* in power”—that party who desired to set aside both the late King's daughters. This scheme was contemplated some time before Henry's death; and the chief conspirators were the Marquis of Dorset, Lord Hertford, and Archbishop Cranmer. The subsequent policy of those men is an evidence—a very conclusive one, too—of the plan arranged to change the succession. The young King Edward seems to have believed the scandals propagated against his sister, for he refused to see her.

* State Papers of Edward's reign.

† Aubrey was subsequently drowned in the Thames. He was deeply regretted by his royal mistress, who spoke of him some forty years later with feelings of affection; and preserved his picture to the last as a memorial of “golden Eliza's” early days of innocence and love.

The persons about the King had potent reasons for defaming the reputation both of Mary and Elizabeth. One sister was represented to Edward as a "crooked-minded vicious Papist;" and the other as "Bold-faced Bess." If Mary was a bigot she was made so by the example of those Reformers who condemned in others that want of charity which characterized their own proceedings.

As to Elizabeth at this juncture, posterity should regard her acts with forbearance, and accept the statements of her enemies with hesitation and mistrust.

Lady Fitz Walter observes that the Princess "appeared to be a well-intentioned, good-natured girl, when about fourteen years of age, but showed at times to be very vindictive, like her mother." Mrs. Ashley's husband, who was a relative of Anna Boleyn, states that he "believed the Lady Elizabeth had a secret affection for the handsome Admiral Seymour, as she blushed whenever he mentioned the Admiral's name." Parry, the Controller of the Household, affirms that the Queen Dowager (Lady Seymour) "was jealous of Elizabeth; and on one occasion "she found the Lord Admiral and the Princess alone, Seymour having his arms around Elizabeth's neck in a loving manner, like a true knight." The Queen was "most indignant, and spoke bitter words to her step-daughter concerning how she found her and the Admiral alone."* Blanche Parry speaks in glowing terms of Elizabeth's sympathy for the poor, and the large amount of her charities.

Subsequent to the Seymour scandals, Elizabeth became

* The private depositions of Catharine Ashley, relative to the "freedom" between Admiral Seymour and the Princess Elizabeth, are set forth in full amongst the State Papers of Edward's reign.

most studious, spending hours daily at her books ; then again, regulating and settling the disputes that sometimes occurred amongst her domestics ; and another pleasing feature in her character, presiding at the wedding feast of some favourite servant, or giving interviews to the humbler folk in the vicinity of her residence ; listening to their household grievances, relieving their wants, and receiving the visits of her little god-children, for whom, like her sister Mary, she entertained an affectionate regard. Christmas brought its labours and its pleasures to Elizabeth. For weeks preceding the great festival she and her maidens worked cheerfully to prepare warm clothing for the poor children in the neighbourhood of Hunsdon and Hatfield. Her income was very limited ; nevertheless she kept Christmas like a worthy daughter of England's Royalty. " My good Lady Elizabeth," says the noted Roger Ascham, " keeps old Christmas right royally ; a great profusion of good eating and drinking, dancing, and fun of divers sorts in merrie style for the twelve days of Christmas."

When summer came, Elizabeth, her maidens, and the more matured Blanche Parry, wandered through fields and dells, in quest of honey and wild flowers—a rustic amusement in which the Princess felt much pleasure.* A sweet little glade in the forest of Walthamstow, local tradition yet points out as the spot where, in the amusement of " blackberrying," Elizabeth " sadly tore her hand and bled much." Another tradition presents the Princess and her lively little maidens seated beneath a tree, in the same forest, listening to the wild notes of the blackbird. Such

* Letters of Blanche Parry.

were the innocent scenes in which Elizabeth Tudor indulged during the last five years of her brother's life.

During her last illness, Lady Seymour wished to see Elizabeth, but her message to the Princess was suppressed. Leti states that the "Queen" had a high opinion of Elizabeth's abilities, and believed her "destined to be the great head of the Reformed Church."

Sir Thomas Seymour, upon the death of his wife, immediately despatched a letter to Elizabeth, conveying the intelligence that *he was a widower*. Elizabeth did not give Seymour much credit for grief, at the loss of his "beloved Kate."* All the principal servants of the Princess were in the pay of the Admiral. Mrs. Ashley advised Elizabeth to write a letter of condolence to Seymour. She replied, "I will not do it, for he needs it not." "Then," said the manœuvring governess, "if your Grace will not, then I will." She accordingly wrote the letter, and showed it to her royal pupil, who, without committing herself in any way, tacitly permitted it to be sent. Lady Tyrwhitt assured her friends that the "Admiral intended to marry Elizabeth as soon as possible, and for that reason he still kept the maidens of his late wife together, in order to have them in readiness to wait on his lovely young bride." Lady Tyrwhitt was in Seymour's confidence, and was cognizant of all his schemes.

Mrs. Ashley admits that she frequently told her pupil, that it was her earnest desire that she should marry the handsome Admiral.†

Elizabeth had only completed her fifteenth year, two days

* Hayne's State Papers.

† Ibid.

after the death of Lady Seymour ; she had no maternal friend to direct and watch over her ; there was not even a married lady of noble birth or alliance in her household, a household comprising upwards of one hundred and twenty persons ; so that she was left entirely to her own discretion, and the counsels of her intriguing governess, Mrs. Ashley, and the treasurer, Thomas Parry. Yet, in those persons, the Princess had unbounded confidence.

A few weeks subsequent to the death of his wife Sir Thomas Seymour visited Elizabeth, attired in "solemn mourning ;" but she could at once perceive that he visited her as a lover. On this occasion he received no encouragement ; he still, however, rested his hopes upon the "eloquent and pretty little chat" advanced in his favour by the lady-attendants. A young lady, named Mountjoy, spoke openly to her royal mistress in favour of a marriage with Seymour. Elizabeth did not like the conversation, and told the lady "to have no more of it, or she would have her thrust out of her presence."*

It was stated by some of the Court ladies, that the difference of nearly twenty years in the ages of the Admiral and the Princess, was compensated by the personal graces which had rendered him the Adonis of Henry's Court.

It was affirmed by the young maiden companions of Elizabeth, that whenever the name of Seymour was mentioned, her Highness could not conceal her pleasure, and appeared delighted. In a word, Seymour was the first, and perhaps the only man whom Elizabeth really and sincerely loved, and for whom she felt disposed to make any sacrifice.†

Correspondence of the Duchess of Somerset and Mrs. Ashley.

† Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. iv. p. 28.

The Princess candidly admitted, that if she obtained the consent of the King's Council, she would, with rapture, marry Seymour. A marriage without the consent of the Council would, however, have involved both parties in ruin. Thomas Seymour's attachment was not of that romantic nature that would brave danger. He belonged to one of the most sordid, mean, and unprincipled families in England. No paltry fortune-hunter of modern times could have made more cunning inquiries into the actual state of a lady's finances than did he into those of the royal heiress of England.

The Duchess of Somerset censured Mrs. Ashley for permitting the Princess to "go one night on the Thames, in a barge with Admiral Seymour."* It was further alleged that he had many private interviews with the Princess. On the other hand, Blanche Parry made a solemn statement to the effect that her royal mistress was never alone with Sir Thomas Seymour, some one of her ladies being always present. "The stories hinted about my good young mistress," continued Blanche Parry, "were all false." Party and sectarian feeling has been unfairly imported into the Seymour scandal concerning Elizabeth.

A few words as to Elizabeth's companion and friend. Blanche Parry was one of the most learned women of her time. She was born in 1508, and died blind in 1589. Blanche Parry, like several other Catholic ladies, enjoyed Elizabeth's confidence to the death.

* Haynes' State Papers.

CHAPTER XVI.

LADY SEYMOUR.

THE time was brief from the Lord Admiral's "attentions" to Elizabeth, until the death of his wife. In 1548, Lady Seymour, historically recorded as the Queen of Henry VIII., and perhaps better known as Catharine Parr, died in childbirth of her first-born. If I can judge from some statements in Hayne's State Papers, Catharine before her death informed a few faithful friends around her, that "the Lord Admiral *wished her death, and that she hinted young Elizabeth was the cause of it.*" Seymour visited her during her last illness, and Lady Tyrwhitt, who was present, alleges that "sharp words were uttered by the wife against the husband." Lady Tyrwhitt further affirms that Lady Seymour told her many things, but was emphatic in saying "*I am not well handled.*"* This sentence is supposed to convey an idea of her having been neglected by the physicians who attended her, at the suggestion of her husband. On the other hand, Catharine is said to have been "in a delirium" when she made these statements to Lady Tyrwhitt. Be that as it may, she had formed a very bad opinion of her husband's constancy. The Reformers publicly declared

* Hayne's State Papers, p. 104.

that their great advocate "was poisoned by the Admiral to please the Papists." Now, Thomas Seymour was at "daggers drawn," to use a common but expressive phrase, with the Catholic party. All the property he possessed was the plunder of Catholics. He was on bad terms with his brother Somerset, and headed a kind of opposition party amongst the Reformers—a section who considered that they did not receive a liberal share of the "loaves and fishes." Seymour was an unprincipled man, and had no regard for religion under any form; yet he was not worse than—perhaps not so bad as—those who accused him of heinous crimes. There is no proof of his having poisoned his wife. It was merely a cry got up by the partisans of Somerset, for the two brothers entertained for each other a deadly hate.

Lady Seymour was thirty-six years of age at the time of her death. She was lamented by the Reformers.

Many writers have passed extravagant eulogies upon the last wife of Henry VIII., perhaps from the notion of her being the "second Protestant Queen of England." It is not of much moment, except in the interests of truth, to analyse probabilities; but whether Reformer or otherwise, Catharine Parr's memory should receive its deserts, and no more. The justice of Dr. Parkhurst's epitaph, describing her as—

"The flower of her sex, renowned, great, and wise,"

will not be widely acquiesced in *now*, when the history of the times is so much better known. No one can well deny to Catharine the credit of possessing the tact which so often conceals innate sentiment. Her Protestantism was probably sincere, but it sometimes appeared artificially intensified.

In truth, in the perilous position of her life, she had to fashion her belief according to the caprice of a disappointed tyrant, swayed by every gust of passion to this or that observance—the terrible Six Articles at one time directing her practice; at another the wayward notions of her dangerous helpmate. She had, after all, no good opinion of many leading Reformers.

“I speak,” she writes, “with great dolour and heaviness of heart of a sort of people which be in the world, that be called professors of the Gospel, and by their words do declare and shew that they be not much affected to the same. But I am afraid some of them do build on the sand, as Simon Magus did, making a weak foundation. I mean they make not Christ their chiefest foundation, but either they would be called *Gospellers*, and procure some credit and good opinion of the true and very favourers of Christ’s doctrines, either to find out some carnal liberty, either to be contentious disputers, finders, or rebukers of other men’s faults, or else finally to please and flatter the world. Such Gospellers be an offence and slander to the Word of God, and make the wicked to rejoice and laugh, saying ‘Behold I pray you their fair fruits.’ What charity, what discretion, what goodness, holiness, and purity of life is amongst them? Be they not *great avengers, foul gluttons, backbiters, adulterers, swearers, and blasphemers*? yea, do they not wallow and tumble in all manner of *sins*? These be the fruits of their doctrine, and yet the Word of God is all holy, sincere, and godly, being the doctrine and occasion of all pure living.”

Miss Strickland maintains the opinion expressed by so many, that Dr. Gardynier had deadly designs on Catharine Parr. “The King,” she says, “never forgave Gardynier the part he had taken in this affair, which proved no less a political blunder than a moral crime.” Mr. Froude disposes of this charge against Gardynier to make away with Catharine Parr. “I look on that story,” he observes,

"not as exaggerated realities, but as pure unadulterated fable." *

In some passages in her "*Lamentations of a Sinner*," Catharine offers the most servile flattery to King Henry, whom she compares to Moses; and the Pope is reviled as a monster of iniquity, the Pharaoh of the sixteenth century. She speaks with a marked feeling of hatred against the creed of her fathers.

"Thanks be given to the Lord," answers Catharine, "that he hath *now* sent us such a godly and learned King in these latter days to reign over us, that, with the force of God's Word, hath taken away the veils and mists of errors, and brought us to the knowledge of the truth by the light of God's Word, which was so long hid and kept under, that the people were well nigh *famished and hungered for lack of spiritual food*. Such was the charity of the spiritual curates and shepherds. But *our* Moses, and *most godly wise governor and king*, that hath delivered us out of the captivity and spiritual bondage of Pharaoh—I mean by this Moses, King Henry VIII., *my most sovereign lord and husband*, one (if Moses had figured any more than Christ), through the excellent grace of God, meet to be another expressed verity of Moses' conquest over Pharaoh (and I mean by this Pharaoh the *Bishop of Rome*), who *hath been, and is, a greater persecutor of all true Christians than ever was Pharaoh of the children of Israel*." †

Notwithstanding their religious differences, a friendship subsisted between Lady Seymour and the Princess Mary. They were near enough in age to have been sisters, they excelled in the same accomplishments, and the taste for learning and studious pursuits of these royal ladies rendered them suitable companions for each other. The more

* Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 318.

† Miss Strickland's Queens of England, vol. v. (first edit.).

brilliant talents of the young Elizabeth were drawn forth and fostered under the auspices of her highly-gifted step-mother. Lady Seymour likewise took an active part in directing the studies of the heir of England, and her approbation appears to have been the greatest encouragement the prince could receive.

In a letter, written in French, to Queen Catharine, Edward notices the beauty of her penmanship. "I thank you," says he, "most noble and excellent Queen for the letters you have lately sent me; not only for their beauty, but for their imagination. For when I see your *belle écriture*, and the excellence of your genius, greatly surpassing my invention, I am sick of writing. But then, I think how kind your nature is; and that whatever proceeds from a good mind and will, may be acceptable, and so I write you this letter."*

The learning of Catharine has been much over-rated: she was a "clever adapter," and, as a eulogist of a century ago has had the candour to aver, "the art to fashion the ideas of past or contemporary genius as her own"—an art which would now be regarded as akin to unfair appropriation, but was then almost necessary from the scarcity of learned men and erudite productions. She was much inferior in inherent talent and grasp of mind to her two step-daughters—Mary and Elizabeth; and failed, too, in a comparison with the benevolent qualities of her royal relatives. Her chastity has been unrepined; her love frigid and accommodating, an assumption to please or deceive her penultimate spouse. In wedding Henry she bowed to the

* Ellis's Royal Letters.

inevitable will of a despot, and at his death nature was vindicated by her espousal of Thomas Seymour. Her romantic attachment for the Admiral is a strange history. Her marriage, however, was regarded by her contemporaries as rather "unseasonable," after being the widow of three husbands. Leti states that exactly thirty-six days after Henry's death a written contract of marriage and rings of "betrothal" were exchanged between Catharine and Sir Thomas Seymour. According to King Edward's Journal the marriage took place before his father was three months dead. About the time of the "betrothal," Queen Catharine wrote a letter to the young King detailing her "*grief for the loss of his father, and the unbounded love she entertained for him.*"* The letter contains many quotations from Scripture. This deception—for it was nothing else—ill became a woman who had the reputation of candour, prudence, and extreme piety ascribed to her by so many writers. The "wisdom and piety" attributed to her were manifested in eluding the perils of her royal wifehood, and in escaping the slander of hostile critics.

It may be said with impartial justice that Lady Seymour was a very good woman for her time, and preserved many of the "proprieties" in a society filled with heartlessness, and at an epoch fraught with dishonour and duplicity.

Lady Seymour was interred in the chapel of Sudeley. In 1782, some ladies of an antiquarian turn of mind, discovered the "exact whereabouts," not more than two feet from the surface. The body was wrapped in cere-cloth. The features, particularly the eyes, were in a perfect state of

* Tytler's *Life of Edward and Mary* ; Royal Letters in the Record Office.

preservation. Curiosity gratified, the grave was closed up again. A yeoman, named Lucas, subsequently opened the grave, and describes the body as still perfect.

"The repose of the buried Queen," says Miss Strickland, "was again rudely violated by ruffian hands, in the spring of 1784, when the royal remains were taken out of the coffin, and thrown on a heap of rubbish and exposed to the public view. An ancient woman who was present on that occasion assured my friend, Miss Jane Porter, some years afterwards, that the remains of costly burial clothes were on the body, not a shroud but a dress, as if in life; shoes were on the feet, which were very small, and all her proportions extremely delicate; and she particularly noticed that traces of beauty were still perceptible in the countenance, of which the features were at that time perfect, but by exposure to the air and other injurious treatment, the process of decay rapidly commenced. Through the interference of the vicar, the body was re-interred."

In October, 1786, a scientific exhumation was made by the Rev. Tredway Nash, and his interesting and valuable report has been published in the "*Archæologia*," from which the following abstract is given :—

"In 1786, October 14, having obtained leave of Lord Rivers, the owner of Sudeley Castle, with the Hon. J. Somers Cocks, the writer proceeded to examine the chapel. Upon opening the ground and tearing up the lead, the face was found totally decayed; the teeth which were sound had fallen. The body was perfect, but in their delicacy they forbore to uncover it. Her hands and nails were entirely of a brownish colour. The Queen must have been of low stature, as the lead that enclosed her corpse was just five feet four inches long. The cere-cloth consisted of many folds of linen, dipped in wax, tar, and gums, and the lead fitted exactly to the shape of the body."

The last time the coffin of Catharine Parr, as this lady has been generally, but incorrectly, styled, was opened, it

was discovered that a wreath of ivy had entwined itself round the temples of the corpse, a berry having fallen there, and taken root at the time of her previous exhumation, and there had silently, from day to day, woven itself into this green sepulchral coronal.

Miss Strickland says:—

“A lock of hair which was taken from the head of Queen Catharine Parr, after it had lain in the dust and darkness of the grave for nearly two centuries and a half, was kindly sent for my inspection by Mrs. Constable Maxwell. It was of the most exquisite quality and colour, exactly resembling threads of burnished gold in its hue; it was very fine and with an inclination to curl naturally.”*

Such is the end of this notable lady's eventful history as a Queen and as a private matron.

* In 1848, Mr. Turner, of Gloucester, presented one of the golden ringlets of Catharine Parr to Miss Strickland. It was enclosed in a locket of exquisite workmanship.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FAMILY FEUD.

THE brothers Seymour were at deadly feud, and persistently plotted against each other. Thomas Seymour having secretly pointed out to the King the undue influence Somerset was wielding in every department of the State, aroused the Prince's suspicions against his uncle; but before his Highness could make further inquiry in the matter, Sir Thomas Seymour was himself betrayed by his agents, and commanded to appear before the Council, where he repelled the charges alleged against him with haughty disdain, and set the Council's authority at defiance;* but when the law officers of the Crown informed him that the real nature of his offence "approached to something like high treason," he expressed his regret, and pleaded ignorance of the law. He was then pardoned, and the fraternal rivals became apparently reconciled, and as a proof of his "good feeling towards his brother, Somerset added £800 a year to Seymour's appointments." It was evident Somerset feared the Admiral's private influence about the King, and was jealous of the estimation in which he was held by the Princesses Mary and Elizabeth. Sir Thomas Seymour's

* Burnet, vol. ii. sec. 15; State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

indiscretion and ambition, however, soon placed him again in the power of his enemies. He now more openly aspired to the hand of the Princess Elizabeth, and the governess was bribed with large sums of money. Young Elizabeth's affections were said to have been won ; but the matter was acknowledged to be surrounded "with serious difficulties." A clandestine marriage could have been easily accomplished ; but, according to the late King's will, such nuptials would invalidate the Princess's claims to the Crown. The plan then adopted by Seymour was to create a party amongst the discontented nobles to extort from the Council and the King their consent to his marriage with Elizabeth.* All his schemes, however, were frustrated. The Protector was determined to crush his aspiring brother. Sherington, the Master of the Mint at Bristol, was examined before the Council on a charge of having amassed an enormous fortune by clipping the coin, issuing "testoons" of inferior value,† and falsifying the entries made in his books. Sir Thomas Seymour, who was his creditor to the amount of £8000, defended the accused ; but Sherington, to save his own life, denounced his advocate and patron. He made a statement, by way of confession, that he had promised to coin a large sum of money for Seymour, who had ten thousand men ready to take the field, and that with their aid he would seize on the person of the King, and overturn the Government, which was so hateful to the country.‡ On this confession of Sherington, Sir Thomas Seymour,

* See Ellis, vol. ii. p. 154 ; Tytler, vol. i. p. 138 ; Lingard, vol. v. pp. 273-4.

† The "testoon" passed for twelve pence, but was not intrinsically worth more than half that sum.

‡ Burleigh State Papers ; Records in Burnet ; the Seymour Quarrel.

was committed to the Tower and attainted of high treason. On several occasions he was brought before the Council for examination. He met the "thirty charges" which were made against him with a contemptuous denial, and he claimed to be confronted with his accusers; but such an act of justice was contrary to the practice of the Government. A Bill of Attainder was hurried through the House of Lords. In the Commons it received some opposition, but the Protector soon overcame the unwillingness of that assembly. The Bill was passed, and received the royal assent. In three days later the warrant for the execution of Sir Thomas was signed by Edward, Duke of Somerset, and Thomas, Archbishop of Canterbury. It has been alleged by the admirers of Somerset, that, when the Bill of Attainder was passing through the Lords, he withdrew for "pity's sake;" but there is no evidence that he did withdraw. From the Journals of the Lords it is certain that the Bill of Attainder was read on three consecutive days, the 25th, 26th and 27th of February, and that the Duke of Somerset was present in his place on each of those days; that on the 27th the Bill was passed with the assent of all the peers present.*

Latimer's conduct on this occasion was characteristic. He preached a sermon before the young King denouncing his unfortunate uncle with the bitterest invective. He described the execution as "an act of justice; that Admiral Seymour led a sensual, dissolute, irreligious life; dangerously, irksomely, horribly." He contended that Sherington's conduct "should receive the approbation of all

* *Lords' Journals*, vol. i. p. 346; *Domestic State Papers of the Reign of Edward VI.*

honest men. The fervency of Sherington's repentance entitled him to his pardon, and made him a fit example for the encouragement and imitation of sinners." * In another passage of Latimer's sermon he doubts whether Seymour's soul could be saved, as "*God had clean forsaken him; that he was a wicked man, and the realm was well rid of him.*"

Let not young Edward, however, be set down as unnatural or ungrateful as a nephew as Latimer was false as a friend. When Somerset kept the King without money, the wayward and generous Admiral was applied to, and Latimer was the "go-between." One letter, written on "a scrap of paper" by the young King, bore these words:—"My lord, send me, per Latimer, as much as ye think good, and deliver it to Fowler.—EDWARD."† Why I say that Edward may not have been ungrateful is, that he was beset with jealous watchers, night and day, and was coerced into signing the warrant for his uncle's death, whilst Latimer, who was engaged in all the Admiral's intrigues—or treasons—went out of his way not only to advise his death but to pronounce his damnation. If Latimer had had the good fortune to have abandoned the field of politics, he never would have earned his questionable reputation as a martyr. Sir Thomas Seymour, if he renounced the religion of his fathers, had a distaste for the teaching of the new preachers.‡ He not only refused to attend his wife's "prayer meetings," but placed impediments in the way of her chaplains; and Park-

* Latimer's Sermon on the Bad Life of Sir Thomas Seymour; Godwin, p. 93; Strype, vol. i. p. 126.

† State Papers MSS.; King Edward's Journal.

‡ Strype's Memorials.

hurst and Coverdale are described as "sorely put upon by the ridicule he cast upon them, asking them from whom they had received their mission to preach, to which they replied stoutly, from Jesus."* "This opposition," remarks Miss Strickland, "came with an ill grace from Seymour, who, for political purposes, professed to be a Reformer, and had shared largely in the plunder of the ancient Church; but in his heart he had no more liking for Protestant prayers and sermons than Queen Catharine's deceased lord, King Henry." This character may fairly be applied to many of the chief notables of the period.†

Sir Thomas Seymour was quickly disposed of. His execution took place at the Tower Hill on the 20th of March, 1549. He died with great apparent fortitude, but is represented as indifferent to religion. A tradition relates that he informed his page, on the morning of the execution, that he would find a letter concealed in the sole of his shoe to Lady Elizabeth, assuring her of the love he entertained for her Highness, to the last moment of his existence. It is, however, rather doubtful if any page was permitted to see him, for the prison usage at the Tower at that period was one of the most cruel isolation. Another version of this story states that, on the scaffold, Seymour informed a friend that he would find two letters between the soles of his slippers for the royal sisters, Mary and Elizabeth. It is further alleged that in those strangely concealed documents he besought both sisters to avenge his death. The Admiral was regretted by the populace of London and those parts

* Parkhurst's *Letters to Bullinger*.

† Admiral Seymour's proper designation was that of "Lord Seymour of Sudbury."

of the country with which he was connected by family and property. When attached to the Court of Henry VIII. he was considered the handsomest "bachelor knight of England"—was gay, magnificent, and brave, excelling in all the manly exercises of the age, and much distinguished for the richness of his dress and ornaments.

It was bruited at one time that Thomas Seymour intended to make proposals of marriage to the Princess Mary; to abandon the Reformers, and return to the olden religion again. It is not likely that the Princess, or the Catholic party, would accept such a scheme, for the very name of the Seymour family became detested in the land; besides, the long-neglected Mary Tudor was too proud to agree to such a match, or to attain political power by such agencies as Thomas Seymour would bring into action.

Between Archbishop Cranmer and Sir Thomas Seymour there had been ill-will for years. In Henry's lifetime the Seymours laid many plots to undermine Cranmer, in fact they acted with systematic perfidy towards him. In Edward's reign "the political situation" compelled both parties to act together. Cranmer, however, lived long enough to aid in accomplishing the fall of the Seymour family, and, as Regent of the kingdom, placed his name on the death warrants, consigning both Thomas and Edward Seymour to the headsman. It is very possible that none of the contending parties found much fault with the Archbishop for the part he had taken against the Seymour family. *

Sir Nicholas Throckmorton censures Somerset severely

* Godwin's *Life of Queen Mary*; White-Kennett; Strype's *Memorials* Haynes' *State Papers*; *Queens of England*, vol. v.; Lingard, vol. v.; Froude, vol. vi.

for the "manner in which he brought about his brother's death." Throckmorton attributes the subsequent fate of the Duke of Somerset to retributive justice. This condemnation does not come with a good grace from a man like Nicholas Throckmorton, whose name appears so often in the "black ledger" of the times. Equity, however, might pronounce a similar verdict against nearly all the leading Reformers of Edward and Mary's time.

Sir Thomas Seymour was a more far-seeing politician than his brother, Somerset; yet equally rapacious and dishonest. Both were addicted to gambling, a vice of which they acquired almost a professional knowledge at the Court of Henry VIII.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CONSPIRACY AGAINST SOMERSET.

THE leading Reformers having filled the gaols with those who protested against the violation of their oaths in the case of the King's "will," and the setting aside of the national religion through the agency of foreign mercenaries, now quarrelled amongst themselves. The result was the overthrow of Somerset. The weakness, ambition, and despotism of the man paved the way for his ruin. He possessed little control over his military agents. Kingston and Russell perpetrated many barbarous deeds in Somersetshire and the Western counties. The number slain by Lord Russell in Devonshire amounted to five thousand.

In Norfolk, Lord Warwick boasted that he had "killed four thousand of the enemy."*

A few words as to the Norfolk campaign. On the morning of the 27th of August, 1549, "the Norfolk insurgents," numbering fifteen thousand brave, honest, but undisciplined men, marched to Duffindale to meet Lord Warwick and his German mercenaries. They took a position in some fields, which gave Warwick a military advantage over them; they had no chance of success, still they advanced

* King Edward's Journal; Holinshed, p. 1002; Hayward, p. 296; Strype, vol. ii. p. 170; State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

and courageously discharged their artillery—such as it may have been. The effective fire of the German troops, however, soon threw them into confusion, and, Warwick's cavalry having charged them, they retreated in thorough disorder, and were pursued for miles, and cut down without mercy or pity. The roads were strewn with the bodies of the Norfolk yeomen, whose only crime was to demand "Liberty of conscience; the liberty to practise the faith held by their fathers for one thousand years." *Three thousand five hundred men were butchered in the retreat.* Commenting upon this terrible spectacle, Mr. Froude deals in a sanguinary epigram. "One rarely hears of wounded on those occasions, except amongst *the victors*.* Mr. Froude makes many very candid admissions as to the rising of the Norfolk people. He observes:—"The people were put down and the *leaders disposed of*." Yes; the Norfolk squires *were speedily disposed of*. Mr. Froude further remarks:—"A success which involved the destruction of ten thousand brave Englishmen by the arms of foreigners, added little either to the credit or the popularity of the Government."† In an antecedent chapter (p. 202) Mr. Froude admits that the "commonwealth was betrayed for the benefit of the few." No doubt it was betrayed for the interests of a few political adventurers. Lord Warwick, for instance, won his "blood-stained spurs" in a few weeks. And, as the reader is aware, Kingston distinguished himself in Devonshire by the sanguinary promptitude of his action, and the levity of his manners. Here is another example of his general conduct.

* Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 218; State Papers of the Reign of Edward VI.; Holinshed's Chronicle.

† Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 216.

Having dined with the Mayor of Bodmin, he asked his hospitable host if the gallows in that town were sufficiently strong. The Mayor replied that he thought so. "Then," said Colonel Kingston, "go out and try." The Mayor *was hanged within one hour from the period of the conversation.**

Mr. Froude does not credit this horrible narrative. "Had Anthony Kingston's despatches survived the account would have been different."† It happens, however, that the murder of the Mayor of Bodmin, by Anthony Kingston, has been well authenticated long since. So much for this attempt at a defence of Kingston and his foreign mercenaries.

For more than a century the traditions of Devonshire furnished many a black narrative of Russell and Kingston's campaign.

On another occasion, having received information against a miller, Kingston proceeded to the mill, and not finding the master he hanged his servant, bidding him "*be content, for it was the best service he had ever rendered to his master.*"‡ It is painful to recur to such narratives; but the writers who chronicle these transactions are not "Papists of any shade," but uncompromising advocates of the Reformers; nevertheless, they felt compelled to place before the world the cruel actions of Somerset's agents, who perpetrated them with the sanction of their chief. The deeds of Kingston and Russell hastened the fall of the Protector. His own visits to Scotland however, were marked with rapine and slaughter even more extensive than those

* Holinshed's Chronicle.

† Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 200.

‡ Speed, p. 113; Hayward, p. 295.

which have rendered so obnoxious the memories of Kingston and Russell. Somerset never enjoyed any real popularity. He is said to have been "beloved by the merchants and traders of London," yet these bodies were the first to approve of Warwick's impeachment of him. The Common Council of London being applied to by Lord Warwick for their support, with one voice declared their approbation of the new measures against Somerset, and their resolution of supporting them.* Chancellor Rich and Lord Russell, who perpetrated so many arbitrary actions at the Protector's order, had abandoned him, and the populace, on whom he so much depended, "did not rise at his summons." The great mass of the country adhered to the principles of their ancestors; and, looking at Somerset as one of the chief organizers of the new order of things, they rejoiced at his overthrow. The large estates which he had so quickly acquired at the expense of the Church and of the Crown, rendered him likewise an object of envy. The palace which he was building in the Strand served, by its magnificence, and still more by the circumstances which attended its construction, to expose him to public indignation. He despised popular opinion when he thought he had become permanent Regent. He had learned to disregard the "rights of property." He pulled down three bishops' houses and the Church of St. Mary, to furnish ground and materials for his new palace. He ordered St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, to be demolished in order to obtain building materials; but the parishioners indignantly resisted, and would not permit such an act of vandalism and

* Stow's Chronicle, p. 597.

sacrilege ; they rose up to defend their church, and compelled the Protector's masons to retire. He next laid hands on a chapel in St. Paul's Churchyard, with a cloister and charnel-house belonging to it, and these edifices, together with the church of St. John of Jerusalem, were made use of to erect his palace in the Strand. What rendered the matter more odious to the populace was, that the tombs and other monuments of the dead were defaced and desecrated, "*bodies and bones were exposed to public view, and then carted away to some filthy ditches, or fields beyond the citie.*"* When the conspiracy formed by the Earl of Warwick and his party in the Council against the Protector became sufficiently matured, Archbishop Cranmer and Sir William Paget openly joined in Warwick's impeachment of Somerset. The confinement of Somerset in the Tower caused the most gloomy apprehensions to the extreme Reformers, whilst the Papal party could discover no difference in the oppression exercised towards them by the contending factions. The articles preferred against Somerset might be divided into three classes, charging him with obstinacy, incapacity, and bad faith during the insurrection in Devonshire. The fallen Minister made a statement, "on his knees," before the Council, that all charges preferred against him *were true, and implored their mercy.* He was deprived of his offices, and fined to the amount of £2000 per year, to be "deducted from his newly-acquired estates."† The prosecution was carried no further, but, to the astonishment of Lord Warwick, the King would not consent to this heavy

* Heylin, p. 72 ; Holinshed ; Hayward ; Hume, vol. iii. (fol. edit.), p. 328.

† State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

fine on his uncle. Somerset was again admitted to the Council, but Warwick had now gained almost despotic power, controlling every department of government. Somerset's ambition and imprudence soon placed him again in the power of his enemies. Fresh indictments were entered against him, in which he was charged with both felony and treason. Before a second trial took place his former friend, the Marquis of Winchester, was created lord high steward. Twenty-seven peers were summoned to attend the trial, among whom were the newly self-created Duke of Northumberland and Lords Northampton and Pembroke. These noblemen were known to be the implacable enemies of Somerset. The depositions against the accused are not in existence, but they are supposed to have been of the same character as those he himself had made in the case of his own victims. He was acquitted of treason, but found guilty of felony. The Marquis of Winchester passed sentence of death upon him.

A humiliating scene followed. The proud man of yesterday became an abject suppliant. He fell upon his knees before Lords Northampton, Northumberland, and Pembroke; but they were deaf to his entreaties. The hapless prisoner was "ordered back to the Tower to prepare for death."* Immured in his cell, after condemnation, the Duke of Somerset must have pondered in bitter reflection on the fate of his brother, Thomas Seymour, who, but three years before, lay in the same dungeon, consigned to the same fate. Vainly did that brother plead to *him* for mercy, and equally fruitless were the supplications of others.

* State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign.

Could he hope from Warwick, his deadly foe, unbound by kith and kinship, for that mercy which he had refused his own brother? Yet he essayed it with the same result. He wrote to Elizabeth to mediate for him with her brother, but the Princess, even if she had the opportunity, could scarcely have the will to intercede for the fratricide of the man for whom he had often unjustly accused her of having indulged a dishonourable affection. Elizabeth was deaf to his petition. And now came the last phase of a marked and signal retribution.

All approaches to the King were closed and guarded. Edward was led to believe in his uncle's guilt, and the only answer the doomed noble received was, "that the executioner should do his duty, but a long respite would be granted to the prisoner to prepare for death." Such was the decision of his nephew, or rather of the Council. Six weeks afterwards the warrant was signed. At eight of the clock, on the morning of January 22nd, 1552, the Protector Somerset ascended the scaffold on the Tower Hill. An immense crowd of the lower classes witnessed the execution. The "royal mercy" had been expected, but none came, although the incident of Sir Anthony Brown, a member of the Privy Council, riding through the Tower portal to the scaffold, gave rise to a cry of "pardon," and interrupted Somerset in his address to the spectators. The condemned was however, quickly undeceived, and resumed his discourse, averring his loyalty to the King, exhorting his auditors to love their Sovereign, obey his councillors, and desiring their prayers that he might die as he had lived—in the faith of Christ." Then, covering his face with a handkerchief, he laid his head on the block, and, at

one blow, the head of the once puissant Protector rolled in the dust. The populace did not seem to regret him.

Somerset, no matter what his crimes, his wiles, his hypocrisies, was the only one of the chief and primary Reformers who died consistently. He said in his last address, that on reviewing his past conduct "*there was nothing which he regretted less than his endeavours to reduce religion to its present state,*" and he exhorted the people, "*to profess and practise the Reformation principles, if they wished to escape the visitations of Heaven.*"*

Such was the closing scene in the brief career of the great lay Reformer, Edward Seymour, Duke of Somerset. Dean Hook, who for obvious reasons would present him to posterity as a disinterested, unblemished statesman, is compelled to admit that "he has received a character for excellence which he does not deserve; and that the fact of his being a Calvinist accounts for the enthusiasm with which his history has been written by some authors."

A question arises what course Somerset would have adopted if he had lived, and was in power at the period of the young King's death. Would he have set aside Henry's daughters, or raised Jane Gray to the throne? He had a strong personal dislike to Elizabeth. His hostility to Mary was on religious grounds alone. The eventuality of prolonged existence would have given us a better insight into his character.

According to the secret correspondence which passed between the Marquis of Dorset and Somerset, the latter was favourable to a marriage between young King Edward and

* The scaffold speech of Edward, Duke of Somerset, described by Pomeroy as "the real champion of Protestantism."

Lady Jane Gray.* Such a marriage was evidently intended as a barrier against the claims of Mary and Elizabeth. The country was not likely to approve of such an alliance. The Grays of Dorset were not popular enough to aspire to such a distinction. Besides, a serious question was bruited as to the legitimacy of Jane Gray. I shall return to this delicate matter in a later chapter.

Although Somerset and Sir William Paget appeared to have acted in harmony, they had serious quarrels, and Paget frequently expostulated with his friend on the dangerous policy of his government, pointing out the evil effects of it, and the consequences that might ensue. Somerset was led by Cranmer and Ridley—prelates who had no weight with any party, and were unpopular with the great mass of the people.†

Anthony Wood affirms that Somerset was a man of small acquirements, ignorant of books and general knowledge. Whilst in the Tower, a prisoner, it is alleged that the Protector wrote a small book, entitled "A Spiritual and most Precious Pearl, teaching all men to love and embrace the Cross, as a most sweet and necessary thing." If Somerset wrote such a book, it was by no means in unison with his Puritan principles. Although the most consistent of the first Reformers, he was nevertheless inconsistent as to some grave matters: for instance, there is still extant a letter of his to Dr. Gardyner, begging of him to "*offer up Mass for the health of his mother's soul after her death.*"

* Haynes' State Papers; Lemon's State Papers on Edward's reign.

† Lemon's State Papers; Despatches of the French Ambassador; Tytler's Edward and Mary, vol. i.

He would not visit his mother when on her death-bed, and it is related that she sent him "a terrible warning, averring that the vengeance of God would pursue him for overthrowing the Church."* Farlow considered Somerset "half a Papist, particularly when he felt any sickness. His wife, who governed him, was a real Papist; the friend of that red-hot Papist, Mary Tudor, who sent our holy Saints to the stake." The Duchess of Somerset, like many others, deceived the Reformers. She desired the "loaves and fishes," and secretly believed in the olden faith. Catholicity, however, desired no such "believers."

There are many painful—it may, in charity be said, incredible—incidents connected with the history of Somerset. He was, for instance, foremost amongst the nobles who availed themselves of the license of the barbarous divorce laws, by whose agency, "old or barren women"—but loyal, virtuous, and true women, withal—were set aside and dethroned from the household, by "young and frisky maidens of sixteen." Perhaps, in following the example of his brother-in-law, King Henry, Somerset brought a charge of immorality into play, and divorced his virtuous wife, adding charges against a relative of his outraged spouse. Incontinently, to use a convertible term, he "espoused a young and comely dame," who soon proved a scorpion to his existence. Retributive justice pursued him farther—his titles and a large portion of his estates were forfeited to his deadly enemy, Northumberland. The

* Bradford, Farlow, and Pomeroy, all "Hot Gospel-Men," were doubtful as to the real principles of the Protector. If he had any fixed notions of religion he was a Calvinist or Predestinarian.

title of Earl of Hertford was, however, genially, if not generously, "restored to his son of the second marriage," by Queen Elizabeth, on her accession; yet, with the characteristic cynicism of her race, Elizabeth persecuted young Hertford to the bitter end; and in a manner quite unworthy of a woman—and of a queen, above all, who affected so much delicate sentiment and romance. In Elizabeth, however, this was a miserable imitation of a frail, but kind-hearted mother. Elizabeth hated and crushed the Seymours, as she did the Grays, but in doing so, let it be admitted that she was visiting upon the children the *lèze-majesté*, the treason, of their fathers. I shall return to this unpleasant subject in a subsequent chapter.

Of the many persons charged with being accomplices in the Protector's alleged treason only four were put to death—namely, Vane, Stanhope, Partridge, and Arundel. They all protested their innocence. Vane, in strong language, assured the spectators on Tower Hill, that "as often as Lord Warwick should lay his head on his pillow, he would find it wet with their innocent blood."* In this case the leading Reformers sent their distinguished fellow-labourer and his trusted companions to the scaffold, on the testimony of suborned witnesses.

Sir John Thynne, the ancestor of the present Marquis of Bath, was the confidential secretary of Somerset. Lord Warwick looked upon Thynne as the versatile agent of his master. He was twice imprisoned in the Tower, and

* Council Book, fol. 259; Stow, p. 007; King Edward's Journal, p. 56; Strype's Memorials.

threatened with the rack—nevertheless he remained faithful to Somerset; but having received several offices, and a portion of the confiscated lands at a nominal price, his interests were interwoven with those of his patron, whose fate he narrowly escaped. Lord Warwick fined him £6,000, and confiscated several of his manors. Thynne, however, was an artful, accommodating politician. His religion was that of the Court for the time being. He also ranked high amongst the successful fortune-hunters of the day, having married the daughter of Sir Richard Gresham, the "Prince Merchant" of London. So between the "State, Matrimonial Alliances, and the Church," the Thynnes made their way to the Peerage, and to fortune.

The widow of the Protector was a notable character amongst the "Women of the Reformation epoch." The marriage of the Duchess of Somerset to an obscure person named Joshua Newdigate, "may," says Miss Aikin, "prove that either ambition was not the only inordinate affection to which the disposition of the Duchess was subject, or that she was now reduced to seek safety in insignificance." There is still extant a large inventory of her jewels and valuables, among which are enumerated two pieces of "unicorn's horn," an article highly valued in those days, from its supposed efficacy as an antidote or a test for poisons. The smallness of her bequests for charitable purposes was remarked as a strong indication of a harsh and unfeeling disposition, in an age when similar benefactions formed almost the sole resource of the sick. A portion of her property was the plunder of hospital revenues.

Heylin draws an unfavourable character of the Duchess of Somerset, whom he describes as "coarse and detracting."

In speaking of Catharine Parr, she rudely remarked : " Did not Henry VIII. marry *her* in his doting days, when he had brought himself so low by his lust, cruelty, and wickedness, that no lady that stood on her honour would venture near him ? And shall I now give place to *her* who, in her former estate was but Latimer's widow, and is now fain to cast herself for support on a younger brother ? If Admiral Seymour teach *his* wife no better *manners*, *I am she that will.*" Hayward pronounces the Duchess " a woman for many imperfections intolerable, but for pride monstrous. She was both exceedingly violent and subtle in accomplishing her ends, for which she spurned all respect for conscience and shame. This woman did bear such invincible hate to the Queen Dowager, first for light cause and woman's quarrels, and especially because she (Queen Catharine) had precedency over her, being the wife of the greatest peer in the land." It is curious to find that the wife of the Protector Somerset enjoyed the friendship of Queen Mary for many years. Mary describes her as " My good Nan ;" and " My good gossip." On the 24th of April, 1547, when the Duchess of Somerset was a woman of powerful influence, the Princess Mary wrote to her to intercede " for two poor servants who were formerly attached to the household of her mother, and who were then in poverty." " My good Nan," writes Mary, " I again trouble you both with myself and all mine. Thanking you with all all my heart for your earnest gentleness toward me and my suits hitherto, reckoning myself out of the continuance of the same."

The Duchess of Somerset died in 1587, at a very advanced age, having outlived nearly all her notable

contemporaries, save Elizabeth, for whom, as a queen, in all her prosperity, she entertained feelings of the most bitter contempt. This appears strange, but there are letters still extant which place the matter beyond doubt. Elizabeth feared her private "detraction."

The Duchess, a few years before her death, returned to the faith of her fathers. Her "Protestantism," writes Lady Fitzwalter, "was a matter of interest." Many of the "dames of qualitie" of the time, at the approach of death called for a confessor. A number of persons have been set down as embracing the "new learning" who never joined Protestantism in any of its forms. "It is," writes Dean Hook, "a very erroneous opinion to believe that all those who quarrelled with Rome and the Papacy at this time, were Protestants. They were no such thing."* They were in many cases bad living Catholics, who subsequently received the sacramental rites of the olden creed at the approach of death. I could cite many notable cases of this kind. For a long period the English Reformation might be more justly called a *revolution in property*. Dr. Coxe, a leading Reformer of Elizabeth's reign once significantly remarked, "that, while the Church possessed a patch of land, there would be a cry for *further* reforms in it," which signified confiscation—the "darling idea" of the newly created nobles.

Somerset had six daughters by his second wife, Anne Stanhope. His cruelly divorced spouse, Catherine Foliot, left him one son, whom he most unjustly disinherited. Three of Somerset's daughters—namely, Anne, Margaret,

* Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii. p. 347.

and Jane Seymour, may be added to the list of "noble authors." The three sisters were noted Greek and Latin Scholars.* They were much esteemed at the French Court, whilst in England, Puritan feeling scoffed at them as Papists, "after their mother's pattern." I doubt, however, if the ladies in question were Papists, even of the "accommodating political type." During the reigns of Edward and Mary, religion became a political and pecuniary consideration. The most outspoken rebels in Mary's reign, when under sentence of death in the Tower, were "supplicating for a confessor." The Dudleys were, perhaps, the most remarkable of those who persistently *traded upon the name of Protestantism.*

* The "three gifted daughters" of Somerset, above alluded to, died unmarried, and were reduced almost to poverty. Queen Elizabeth cast them away. She hated the whole family.



CHAPTER XIX.

CORRUPTION AMONGST THE JUDGES.

No equitable writer could with any sense of truth or honour defend the practice of Lord Chancellor Wriothesley, who, acting in the spirit of other supposed Catholics, professed zeal for a religion with which he merely concurred in order to betray. He disgraced Christianity by the cruelty with which he carried out the King's orders "for the torture of heretics." Wriothesley's conduct to Anne Askew—a lady of beauty and ancient lineage, who was supposed to be promoting the Reformation principles, as the secret agent of Catharine Parr, was as unjustifiable as cruel.* It is stated that this unhappy lady was ordered to be racked in the Tower, on which occasion the Chancellor was present, accompanied by Rich, the King's Advocate. The former "expressed his disapproval" of the manner in which the official administered the torture, and then, it is alleged, put his own hand to the screw, and "drew it so violently that he almost tore the body of the sufferer asunder." Anne

* In 1549 John Bale published a book in vindication of Anne Askew, entitled "The Elucidation of Lady Anne Askew's Martyrdom." In this work he charged Bishop Gardiner with being the cause of Anne Askew's death. This statement is entirely untrue. Gardiner was unconnected with the Court at this period; besides, his influence had been on the decline for some time.

Askew was then condemned to be burnt alive, and being so dislocated by the rack that she could not stand, was conveyed to the stake in a chair. The authorities cited for these alleged barbarities are Foxe, Speed, and Baker. Foxe asserts that he transcribed the account from Anne Askew's own paper on the subject; but if she had been in the condition described, she could hardly have committed to paper an account of her sufferings. Foxe, however, is no authority. Speed, taking a contemporary as his evidence, states that "King Henry *himself* had ordered Anne Askew to be stretched on the rack, being exasperated against her for having brought prohibited books into his palace, and imbued his queen and nieces (Suffolk's daughters) with her doctrines." Singular to say, Burnet questions the accuracy of the special charge here made against Wriothesley, and Hume concurs in the doubt. Lingard likewise questions the statement as to the Chancellor being present at the scene of torture, and asserts that the rack was illegal at that period, although used, and was merely the instrument of the Sovereign and his ministers to discover what "they considered plots." He gives no credit to any of the relations on this subject. "To me," he observes, "neither story appears worthy of credit. For, 1st. Torture was contrary to law, and therefore was never inflicted without a written order subscribed by the Lords of the Council. 2nd. The person who attended on such occasions to receive the confession of the sufferer was always some inferior officer appointed by the Council, and not the Lord Chancellor, or other members of that body. 3rd. There is no instance of a female being stretched on the rack, or subjected to any of those inflictions which came under the denomination of

torture." * Mr. Foss expresses an opinion to the effect that "the Chancellor was not concerned in the racking of Anne Askew."

Like Lord Crumwell, Chancellor Wriothsley attended executions at the stake for heresy, and it is asserted that the levity of his manner on those occasions was similar to that which characterized Crumwell and his officials. It would be difficult to prove or disprove the extent of the cruelty exercised by the ministers of so whimsical a tyrant as Henry VIII. Wriothsley's conduct with respect to Queen Catharine Parr has been placed in the worst light by several writers; but, like Gardynier, he has been misrepresented in this instance. The King, when it suited his purpose, threw the odium of his own misdeeds on his ministers. The plans laid for the destruction of Catharine Parr were actually conceived by Henry himself. The state of his health, however, and some domestic matters interposed—not mercy. He would have had his wife to believe that the Lord Chancellor and Bishop Gardynier were the persons who suggested her impeachment for heresy. Miss Strickland and other writers are inclined, with considerable justification, to believe, that if Henry had recovered his health, he would have dispatched his sixth wife in perhaps a worse mode than that in which he had disposed of Anne Boleyn and Catherine Howard. In the copy of a will drawn, but not attested, there is an ominous sentence respecting a provision for the offspring of a *seventh* spouse; and, besides being a "heretic," Catharine had been barren to him, as well as to her two previous husbands. That

* Lingard, vol. v. p. 201; also Jardine on the Use of Torture.

Gardynr and the Chancellor disliked Catharine Parr, there can be no question, and they had every reason to be hostile to that artful and intermeddling lady; but, as above stated, there is no proof that they conspired against her life. The persecution of the Reformers at this time has been attributed to the "suggestions of the King's Papist advisers." But judging from the correspondence between the monarch and his ministers, on those matters, the "persecutors" were merely "carrying out the King's instructions." They "carefully apprised his Highness every day of what steps they had taken against "obstinate thinkers," and never ventured to rack, torture, or burn at the stake, except, by the express orders of his Highness the King."* Let it also be recollected that most of the members of this same Council were Reformers in the next reign—perhaps, were perilously secret Protestants in that of Henry.

Chancellor Wriothesley received his share of the confiscated property, and some of it under discreditable circumstances: but neither party seems to have had any scruples in plundering the "heritage of the poor." The Cistercian Abbey of Bittlesden, in Buckinghamshire, value £143 yearly (now representing £2842), was bestowed by Henry on Wriothesley; also several valuable manors; and in his will Henry bequeathed £500 to his Chancellor, as a memorial of his regard for him; "but it is probable the money was never paid, as the King's will was violated in every item named as legacies and otherwise.

The imprudence of this Chancellor at a subsequent period gave the Duke of Somerset and Archbishop Cranmer an

* State Papers (Domestic) of Henry's reign.

opportunity of dismissing him from office; but under any circumstances they were certain to ignore him, as he stood directly opposed to their secret policy. He was, with all his faults, faithful to King Henry, loyal to the Tudor dynasty, and under no plea would he favour the Reformation. Such a man could hold no position in Somerset's government.

Wriothesley and Rich became hated by the people, on account of "suborning witnesses," and assisting Cranmer and the Seymours in their fatal conspiracy against unfortunate Catharine Howard.

Lord Campbell has drawn a contrast between the demerits of Lords Audley and Wriothesley:—"Wriothesley," he says, "displayed very different qualities from his predecessor (Audley), being a man of principle; but he was, if possible, a worse minister, for when invested with power he proved narrow-minded, bigoted and cruel. Fortunately he was likewise rash and headstrong, so that his objects were generally defeated, and his political career was short."

"Few persons," writes Mr. Foss, "who have held a prominent position in the State, have had so little said to their credit as Thomas Wriothesley. When advanced to high office, his conceited opinion of his own superiority, made him treat with disdain those who differed from him; and this disposition operated with peculiar force against those who advocated the Reformed doctrines. . . . Although attached to the Papal Church, he showed no scruples in sharing the plunder of the monastic confiscation; he received grants of lands from the King, and even accepted others from the Council that was planning his own disgrace."*

* Foss's *Judges of England*, vol. vi. p. 336.

That Wriothesley persecuted the Reformers there can be no doubt, and they retaliated in the same spirit upon him. Wriothesley took the oath of supremacy to Henry, by which he solemnly abjured the spiritual headship of the Pope ; yet, like many others, he took the oath through fear or avarice. His general conduct and character, however, present a marked contrast with that of his colleagues at the time of Henry's death. He could not agree with Somerset, Warwick, Pembroke, Paget, Winchester, Cranmer, or Rich, and their subordinates, who commenced the new reign with perjury and the violation of their solemn oaths to a dying monarch.

I must here return to the case of Anne Askew, the particulars of whose persecution and death seem even now to be imperfectly understood. Bishop Bonner was favourable, if not friendly, to her ; he did not wish to adjudicate upon her case. He considered her "brain somewhat affected by reading the Scriptures." It has been alleged that Gardyner was the "person who panted most for Anne's blood, out of hatred to the Queen." Gardyner never descended to such a mode of disposing of an enemy ; and it is highly probable that the "implacable feeling," that pursued Anne Askew to the death, had its origin in the King's hatred to his wife and her Protestantism.

Sir George Blagge, a Nottinghamshire Knight, whom Henry in his gross convivial moments styled his "fat pig," was the originator of many of the stories respecting Anne Askew and her fellow-sufferers, and one of his statements was, that he himself would have been roasted alive, if the "bishops had their own way." There are several versions of the charges against Gardyner and Bonner, at this juncture ; but there is no official record to corroborate evidence of them.

Blagge was supremely careless of any creed, but like most of his companions improved his fortune by adopting the principles of the Reformation, which he carefully abandoned whenever danger approached.* Historical statements based upon the evidence of such men as Blagge and the Seymours must be cautiously received, unless corroborated by trustworthy testimony.

Anne Askew, or Thynne, is described in the Council Book as "very obstinate and heady in reasoning on matters of religion."† She was tried before Archbishop Cranmer, as the chief judge of the Ecclesiastical Court, and the Archbishop condemned her to the flames. The accounts with respect to the scene in Smithfield at the immolation of Anne Askew are very contradictory. Wriothesley and Russell are described as being spectators, and behaving "with great levity of manner"; whilst others allege that they were *not* present. The whole transaction, whether with the King's express sanction, or the act of his ministers—who represented both the Papal and Anti-Papal party—condemns all concerned to indignant reprehension.‡

Most writers upon this epoch of English history are notably silent upon the number of sentences for heresy, pronounced by the judges, and carried into execution by Crumwell in the reign of Henry. Crumwell boasted that he had sixty-two thousand people in gaol at various times, charged with offences against the State—treason, heresy, and agrarian crime. The reader is also aware that in the reign of Edward, Cranmer and Coverdale sat in

* John Hale's Sermon on the Sins of Rich Men.

† Harleian MSS.

‡ See Ellis, vol. iii. p. 117; Collier, vol. ii. p. 212; Stow, p. 592: State Papers, 868.

council, and sentenced to the stake many Anabaptists, and others who dissented from the "newly-arranged doctrines" of the Archbishop of Canterbury.

Here is a specimen of the cruelty of those times. A special statute was passed in Henry's reign (Feb. 1530-1) declaring that deliberate poisoning should be "considered as great a crime as high treason." But the penalty awarded was far more horrible—namely, "*to be boiled alive in the presence of the populace*" and "*without the benefit of clergy.*"* Richard Rouse, the Bishop of Rochester's cook, who poisoned six persons, suffered under this barbarous law. "He roared mighty loud," says an old chronicle, "and divers women who were big with child did feel sick at the sight of what they saw, and were carried away half dead; and other men and women did not seem frightened by the boiling alive, but would prefer to see the headsman at his work." These were "jolly times," writes John Bale, afterwards one of the Bishops whom Lord Warwick benignly appointed to the See of Ossory, but whom the "Savage Irish" would have "no concern with."

Somerset, in dismissing Wriothesley from the Chancery, conferred upon him the title of Earl of Southampton, with a "certain sum to sustain the honour of the peerage." This was rather a clever stroke of policy, for both giver and receiver entertained a deadly hatred for each other. When Somerset was impeached by his colleagues, the newly-created Earl of Southampton came forward to aid the Earl of Warwick in overthrowing the Protector. In the House of Peers he brought his talent and influence to bear upon the

* Statutes of Henry VIII.'s reign.

question ; and joined in the shout raised both by Protestant and Catholic to strike off the head of the universally-hated Edward Seymour. When Somerset was disposed of, the Earl of Southampton looked to Lord Warwick for a political post as a reward for *his* services ; and Warwick having *his* turn served, repudiated his former colleague in the Council. This disappointment brought to Wriothesley an illness which terminated fatally in a few weeks (July 30, 1550).*

In estimating the character of a man in those troublous times it would be unjust to apply the estimate of modern notions. In that age toleration was in as little favour with the advocates of the Reformation as with the professing and unworthy adherents of the ancient faith ; and although we may condemn the extremes to which Wriothesley was driven by his fervid zeal, we cannot help respecting the sincerity and fidelity which distinguished him from the vast majority of King Henry's courtiers and counsellors, as well as the chiefs of faction in the reign of Edward VI., who were ever ready to make faith, virtue, honour, and all the sentiments of truth, subservient to personal ambition, to power, license, and avarice.

Sir RICHARD RICH, who succeeded Wriothesley as Chancellor, also participated in, and sustained persecutions in Henry and Edward's reigns. Like Dr. London, he had a potent leaning for the strongest side, and "betrayed no weakness in supporting self" in the vital wrestle of interests which in his time occurred. He was the chief witness against his patron and generous friend, Sir Thomas More, on which occasion he was guilty of the characteristic

* Foss's *Judges of England*, vol. vi.

dastardliness of wilful and deliberate perjury. John Foxe, for once essaying truth, portrays Rich as "cruel and unprincipled." Can it be believed that acting as the King's Advocate, Rich laid aside his robes to aid in the torture of Anne Askew; and that at another time Piers Dutton charged him, so high a dignitary, with purloining some of the golden chalices intended for the "royal crucible?" Rich, of course, denied the accusation. Piers Dutton was an arrant liar, and so was Rich. This is the only truth that Henry found out: the gold was never elicited. When Rich was Chancellor to King Edward in 1551, he persecuted the Princess Mary for the practice of her religion, but for doing so received the rebuke of Cranmer. Amongst the death-warrants signed by Chancellor Rich in Edward's reign, was that of his personal friend, Thomas Seymour. Oldmixon describes the Chancellor as a man who was "neither Papist nor Protestant;" and in another place he avers his belief that he was "more Papist than Protestant." The opinion of both parties is strongly against Chancellor Rich.

Chancellor Rich was the sort of man to suit, in every respect, the members of the Protector Somerset's Cabinet. In early life he was "esteemed very light of his tongue, a great dicer and gamester, and not of any commendable fame."* In 1537, an insult was cast on the House of Commons, which shows strikingly the degraded condition to which Parliament was reduced in the reign of Henry VIII. On the recommendation of the Crown, Rich, who was scarcely free from any vice except hypocrisy, was elected Speaker. While in that office he rendered effective service

* Speech of Sir Thomas More on his trial.

in reconciling the Commons to the suppression of the greater monasteries, and the grant of their possessions to the King. The monastic estates were placed under the management of a Royal Commission, and Rich was constituted the head of it with the title of "Chancellor of the Court of Augmentations." His first care, of course, was to augment his own fortune, and he obtained a grant of the dissolved priory of Leighes, in Essex, and of other abbey lands of immense value, which were found to be a sufficient endowment for two earldoms enjoyed by his sons.* He had been a spendthrift in his youth; but cupidity in his later years grew with wealth, and he became with advance of age, penurious. In 1544 he was installed as Treasurer of the King's Wars in France and Scotland—an office by virtue of which the whole of the expenditure for the pay and provisioning of the army passed through his hands, which afforded ample scope for his propensity to accumulate.

Soon after the capture of Boulogne, Rich was one of the Commissioners who negotiated the peace between France and England. He was now in high personal favour with King Henry, conforming himself to all his Sovereign's caprices; assisting at the Council Board; examining and punishing Reformers for violations of the Six Articles, and Catholics for refusing to acknowledge the King's spiritual supremacy. When Henry's "will" was drawn up, Rich was appointed one of the sixteen executors who were to carry on the government during the minority of Edward.†

* Monastic Memorials; Lands conferred on Lord Rich.

† This extraordinary "last testament" is still extant, and to be seen in the archives of the English Benedictines, at St. Gregory's, Flanders.

Somerset hesitated to accept the services of Lord Rich—still he could perceive that such an agent was essential to the success of his own endeavours at aggrandisement. So Rich became Chancellor; he discharged the duties of the office with considerable ability, and went by order of the Council to the Princess Mary, to announce to her the determination of the Government that no “private Mass should be celebrated in her house.” The Princess returned a resolute answer, declaring that none of the “new service” should be used in her establishment.* It has been stated by some of his contemporaries that he did not wish to act against the Papal party in the persecuting spirit of Somerset or Cranmer. If this were so, then he must have been bribed, or had some special incentive. He refused to execute the orders of the Council, on one particular occasion, whereupon the young King wrote to him, marvelling at his refusal. In less than three months he resigned office. By an entry in his Journal, the King attributes Rich’s retirement to illness. Hayward, however, gives a different reason. He suggests that a wish to keep the large estates he had got possession of, and his desire to avoid the troubles he foresaw in the coming session of Parliament, made him petition for his discharge from office, on the pretence of bad health.† Heylin’s explanation is curious. He avers that the Chancellor did not wish to act in a judicial capacity against Somerset, who had been just committed to the Tower a second time. It is incredible that any such generous feeling could have ever touched the heart of Lord Rich; besides, he hated Somerset, and the latter detested him. The real

* Domestic State Papers of Edward’s reign.

† Hayward; *Tyler’s Edward and Mary*, vol. i.; *Foss’s English Judges*, vol. vi.

cause of his retirement was, it is very possible, owing to a fear of losing his estates, and then—perhaps his head. He still, however, attended in his place as a Lord of Parliament, and gave his advice to the Council in their proceedings against Somerset. When his late colleague's fall was at hand, he acted with his accustomed perfidious heartlessness. He would not judicially pronounce against him; but he gave Lord Warwick the benefit of his legal opinion as to how the Protector was to be sent to the scaffold, "without the appearance of malice on the part of the Government." He zealously promoted the measures in favour of the Reformation, yet his motives for doing so were wholly personal. He "feared," says Lord Campbell, "a counter-revolution in religion by which his share of the Church plunder might be wrested from him.*"

Whilst Chancellor, Lord Rich, at the suggestion of Dr. Cranmer, passed a Bill through Parliament to legalize the marriage of the clergy, to which he added a clause to the effect that priests would, nevertheless, do better to "remain true to their vows of celibacy."† This law was for many years most unpopular in the provinces, especially amongst the women.

Much as Lord Rich was mistrusted by the Council, he was called upon to aid in the closing plot of the reign. He not only witnessed the King's "will," and subscribed the undertaking to support its provisions, which altered the succession of the Crown and settled it on Lady Jane Dudley (Gray), but he also gave such prominent aid to the

* See Lord Campbell's *English Chancellors*, vol. ii. pp. 11, 12.

† *Statutes of Edward VI.*

project as to induce the Lords of the Council to address a letter of thanks to him for his valuable services.*

By a timely desertion of this flagitious Council, Rich escaped the immediate consequences of their acts ; and he obtained favour with Queen Mary by his facile return to Catholicity, and his fervid protest "against the further growth of heresy." In a few weeks after Mary was proclaimed Queen, Lord Rich was nominated one of the Council to attend at a sermon preached at Paul's Cross.† He was also summoned among the twenty-five peers appointed to try the Duke of Northumberland for the crime in which he himself largely participated.‡ He further appears on the commission for deciding on the claims to do service at the Queen's coronation, and his name was frequently placed at the head of the commission *in his district for trying heretics, at the cruel execution of some of whom he was present.*§

During the ten years that Lord Rich lived under the reign of Elizabeth, little is known of him, but that he was most accommodating in his opinions to the Queen and her Council. "He was," writes Lord Campbell, "one of the most sordid as well as most unprincipled men that ever held the office of Lord Chancellor of England." So entire was Lord Rich's seclusion, that his existence was almost forgotten ; and thus as he was rejoicing over the amount of his gains from the religious tempest which had swept the land, and enjoying the delights of his beautiful country retreat, where every luxury was at hand, he was suddenly smitten

* Lingard, vol. vii. ; Foss's English Judges, vol. vi.

† Heylin, vol. ii. p. 93.

‡ Report Pub. Rec. App. ii. 234.

§ Foss's English Judges, vol. vi.

by a mortal illness. When the miserable man ascertained that a prolongation of life was impossible, he eagerly besought those about him to procure a priest quickly. "He seemed," says a spectator, "in a state of horrors. He cried out to the Lord Jesus to have mercy on his sinful soul." "He always, in his heart, believed in the olden religion ; and he lost his soul by avarice." Such were his last words. A messenger was despatched by his Protestant domestics for a priest, but before the arrival of the Confessor the soul of the Chancellor was before its God.* Such was the end of one of the leading Reformers who induced Lady Jane Dudley to accept the Crown, and betrayed her in ten days.

THOMAS GODRICH, Bishop of Ely, became the successor of Lord Rich. He was appointed by Northumberland (1551) while Somerset lay under sentence of death in the Tower. As the new Chancellor was utterly ignorant of the legal duties of the Chancery Court, Sir Thomas Beaumont, the Master of the Rolls, was "commanded" to hear and adjudicate upon all cases in Chancery. Godrich became—as was intended—a mere cypher in the Council, giving legal effect to the secret policy of Northumberland and Cranmer. He, therefore, as Chancellor, signed every despotic decree which the Council proposed, and was a participator in the treason which intended to set aside the succession of the Tudor sisters. In this plot he felt reluctance to act, exclaiming, "It is wrong ; it is wrong—I will not do it." But being a very timid man, he feared the

* The Deathbed of Chancellor Rich. A Discourse by John Hales, Preacher, on the "Doings of Wicked and Worldly People."

haughty Northumberland so much that he soon yielded. Upon the death of Edward VI. he appeared at Sion House to salute Jane Dudley as Queen of England. On the following day, as Chancellor, he signed a document—to which Cranmer's name was also affixed—addressed to the Lady Mary, "commanding her to abandon her false claims to the Crown, and to submit to her lawful and undoubted Sovereign, Queen Jane."* But a few days later the affrighted Chancellor abandoned Lady Jane's party, and surrendered the Great Seals to Lords Arundel and Paget to present to Queen Mary, "humbly imploring mercy for his treason." "He was," writes Lord Campbell, "beset with great terrors from the part he had taken in concocting the patent to change the succession; but partly from his clerical office, or from his real insignificance, he was not molested in his diocese." He was the mere tool of Northumberland. His former zeal for the promotion of the Reformation had now almost disappeared, and he offered no opposition to the restoration of the olden faith. Indeed, he seems to have possessed the accommodating manners of Dr. Kitchen and Dean Wotton. He did not long survive the change; he died in May, 1554. "In the lottery of life," says Lord Campbell, "some high prizes are appropriated to mediocrity, and Thomas Godrich was the holder of a fortunate ticket."

Chancellor Godrich was a man of obscure origin and small acquirements. He had been a scholar of Cambridge, and was amongst some of the first in that University who spoke in favour of the Reformation, but cautiously avoided

* State Papers of Mary's reign.

making any public avowal of his opinion until after King Henry's death. He was employed by Cranmer to assist Poynt and himself in the "revision of the Prayer Book," and was rewarded for his labours by the Bishopric of Ely.

In Queen Mary's reign he was "merely tolerated," and before his death he returned to the olden creed of England. When in power, and the colleague of cruel men, he was, it is but just to say, always opposed to persecution, and his Protestantism differed much from that of his party. Little is known of his private life, but that he was kind to his relatives, and made ample provision for his two daughters, who subsequently took the veil in Madrid.*

The Chancellors who held office under Edward VI., in many instances acted on their own responsibility, without either statute law or precedent to guide them. In 1549, Lord Rich, as Chancellor, issued a proclamation under the Great Seal, addressed to "all justices of the peace, commanding them in the King's name to arrest all coiners and setters abroad of vain and forged tales and lies, and to commit them to the galleys, there to 'row in chains during the King's pleasure.'"† Proclamations were issued fixing a certain price for the sale of provisions, quality, &c.; also with respect to base coinage, entailing heavy penalties on the evil-doers. The latter proclamations were among Rich and Godrich's best actions. How far they were obeyed is very doubtful. With respect to the uses made of the Great Seal in political matters, there seems to have been a total

* Pomeroy's Letters to Lascelles on Chancellor Godrich.

† Strype's Memorials; Campbell's Chancellors, vol. ii.

disregard of either equity or law, or that sense of honour which once characterized English Chancellors. In the hands of such a judge as Sir Thomas More, this dangerous mode of procedure might perhaps be used for the good of the community at large, but it was an irresponsible exercise of power which a country possessing the forms at least, of a representative Government, should not permit.

The judges and magistrates, in the days of Elizabeth and her successor, James I., were, if possible, more corrupt. Archbishop Hutton, writing in the reign of Elizabeth, remarks upon the venality of the officials of the Crown. "If," he says, "you require a favour from a judge, or some one about the Court of our blessed Queen, you must first send a nice present to the person in power, for few good actions are now performed without a *motive*." Sir John Harrington also bears testimony to the venality of the Judges in the reign of Elizabeth. Harrington is decidedly a trustworthy authority on this matter.

CHAPTER XX.

ANCIENT RITES IGNORED.

AN Act of Parliament was passed in Edward's reign "to further continue" the abstinence from flesh meat on Fridays and Saturdays, "ember days," the eve of holydays, and Lent, as a "holy season." An Act was also passed by the Parliament of the boy-King "regulating the holydays to be kept." The list was, however, somewhat curtailed, as many favourite Saints were set aside. It is strange that the days appointed in honour of the "Virgin, and All Saints Day" hold a prominent place on the list of Protestant holydays adopted by the Reforming Parliament. The statute concerning fasts and holydays was drawn up under Cranmer's inspiration; and was passed through its various stages in the Lords by the Archbishop of Canterbury.*

An Anabaptist preacher, named Isaac Farlow, states that whilst Somerset, Warwick, and Cranmer, enforced this new statute, they constantly violated it themselves. Bale and Poynt publicly boasted of having "feasted with good jolly belly cheer" on the anniversary of the Crucifixion.

* The Acts passed by Edward's Parliament concerning "fasts and holydays," are printed in Dodd's *Church History*, vol. i. pp. 400-403.

The reader is aware that Latimer made an indecent display by giving a banquet to his friends on Good Friday, which caused King Henry to command his "expulsion." In Edward's reign this inconsistent prelate professed to observe the "abstinence laws" passed by Parliament. The fervid Protestant party denounced the fasts as the invention of the Pope, and should therefore be rejected. Dean Hook notes that "serious innovations subsequently took place, and that many of the fasts were unobserved; holydays fell into disuse; and confession underwent changes; that the Communion service was long a matter of painful anxiety to scrupulous people." There was still a latent feeling for the "Latin Mass and its grand spiritual surroundings;" but successive governments, by penal enactments, aided by the reforming bishops, crushed the Catholic faith in every part of the land; nevertheless, it had numerous adherents, and many martyrs who ascended the scaffold with the enthusiasm of the primitive Christian. Liberty of conscience, however, was a sentiment the English Reformers would not permit. They did not seem to understand such a sentiment.

The Puritan Reformers held many meetings in Edward's reign to "determine upon the fasts." Public opinion was much divided. The women of the "new learning" were, with few exceptions, in favour of the fasts—in fact they still held to the most important observances of the olden creed. The discussions were not edifying, and showed the fanatical feeling that moved the Anabaptist section of the Reformers. London was crowded with a new class of preachers who were nearly as ignorant as those they professed to instruct; and immorality and drunkenness were

sadly prevalent amongst those men. In a former chapter I have remarked upon the debased state of society and the hopeless condition of the lower classes. I now present to the reader a few items from the agitation concerning the "Lent Fast." The new preachers denounced Lent as an invention of Popery. Tongue and Joseph, two London preachers, were loud in their denunciation of Lent. They said that "belly cheer should be taken as often as Nature desired." Tongue told his congregation that Lent "was one of Christ's miracles, which God ordained men not to imitate or follow, and that it was an insupportable burden." This opinion was adopted by many. Ballads and rhymes were circulated on Lent. Some of these documents were of a gross description, supposed to have been written by John Bale, who was the author of a shocking lampoon upon the Mass. Ballads were sent through the country upon the "Death and Burial of Lent." One of those publications was extensively circulated in the diocese of Winchester, entitled "Jack Lent's Testament." In this publication Dr. Gardyner was ridiculed for maintaining the penitential season. He complained to Somerset of those unedifying proceedings, but received no redress, although the Court professed to uphold Lent, and issued a proclamation to that effect. The young King's "Diet for Lent" was made public, much to the annoyance of the extreme party of Reformers. Another section of Reformers were in "favour of keeping the Lent, but not as a religious custom." In what other light could it be observed? Latimer told the multitude, at Paul's Cross, that "those who regarded not laws and statutes were despisers of magistrates." "There be laws made for

diet," he says, "what meats we shall eat at all times. This law is made in policy, as I suppose, for victuals' sake, that fish might be used as well as other meats."* Latimer thus preached by order of the King's Council, but practised, as the reader is aware, quite the opposite. A monk named Gregori, who became a Baptist preacher, alleged that fasting had no divine origin, and told his hearers to take plenty of "belly cheer, and get wifed."

John Rasper, a preacher, assured the populace at Old Cheape that it "was a sin against nature to curtail the necessary quantity of 'belly cheer.' He would have no more Lent; no more unwifed priests, no nuns; every maid should get a husband. Lent was a device of the Pope; then down with it."

Stephen Winter, once a secular priest, who said he saw the "error of his way," was "loud in his protestations against Lent, because it disturbed the regular course of 'belly cheer.'" Roger Turner, another preacher, informed his audience that "Lent was instituted by the Pope, and then it could not be a goodly thing. It interfered with the law of Nature. It was the enemy of 'belly cheer.' Therefore they should put it down."

Jacob Rice advised the people to "search the Scriptures well, and they would find that the Patriarchs respected the 'belly cheer' usages. Moses was fond of 'belly cheer'—so was Saul and David; and King Solomon told his servants and slaves to take their fill of 'belly cheer.' Take 'belly cheer' first, and then search the Scriptures, and praise the Lord on High."†

* Strype's *Cranmer*, vol. i.; *Sermons at Paul's Cross*.

† Adam Goldstick's *Account of the Lent Controversy about "Belly Cheer."*

In the ale-houses the question of keeping Lent was discussed with bitterness; but the majority of the people seemed inclined to "preserve the old custom." The most implacable adversaries of Lent were apostate priests who subsequently filled lucrative positions in the Church under Elizabeth; yet that monarch "rigidly maintained, in person," the fast days of the olden creed.*

Isaac Parker essayed many sermons in favour of "belly cheer" in Lent. He boasted of having entertained Bernard Gilpin, Bradford, and Bale to "a savoury dinner of various meates," on Ash Wednesday. *On his deathbed two women claimed him as their husband.*† Radclyffe describes Parker as an exemplary priest of the diocese of Canterbury in the days of Archbishop Wareham. He was seventy-five years old at the period of his death, and still a tall fine-looking man. Hart and Dance, two preachers, were also in favour of abolishing the Lent fasts; for which they became unpopular with the lower class of women, who, however debased and fallen, still looked on Lent as a penitential season; and a large number of them gave proof of their sincerity by their mode of life during what they styled "The Black Fast." Radclyffe further relates, that even "small thieves" and "highway wolves" (men) were "moderate in their demands during Lent, the last week of which the great majority of them rarely molested man or woman."

John Lee, of the diocese of Salisbury, became one of the

* On the Evil Life of Gospel Preachers, printed at Antwerp in 1561.

† Simon Cusack's Narratives on the "Belly Cheer Division." Adam Goldstick was the *nom de plume* of Maister Vaughan, a lawyer of the Temple, who made up a little book on the antics of the new preachers and their fanatical congregations.

new preachers. He declaimed against Lent in very gross language. He had permission, like other "expounders," to make harangues at Paul's Cross, where scenes of blasphemy were daily repeated for the amusement of a drunken and licentious mob. The language of this fallen man is unfit for these times. He told his congregation in a very impressive manner to place no faith in a priest that was not "wifed." Lee was the friend and fellow-labourer of John Bale—a circumstance that fully manifests the value of his teachings. Apostles of the appetite may be in favour with the rich and sensual; but to tell a plundered and hungry people to indulge in plenty was too much, even for the ignorance of the masses, the very lowest and most abandoned of whom alone listened with approval to the materialism of Lee and his brother preachers.

The principle of abstinence and fasts was considered "highly necessary" by a very large number of the German Lutherans, but the "religious principles," and the practice of the same, were far from agreeing.

The physician of Edward VI. states that his royal master was "obstinate in his desire to maintain the exclusion" of meats on Friday, and other days, "commanded by Parliament." On one occasion the doctor assured his royal patient that fish was not suitable as a diet for one so delicate as his Highness. He "should partake of dainties in the way of fowl, cooked in the Spanish fashion." "Ah, good maister doctor," said the King, with an air of gravity far beyond his years, "what would my people think of me, as *Head of the Church*, to deliberately partake of 'belly cheer' of meat kind on Fridays? Why, they would say that I deserved to be sent to the *stake* as a lustful feeder. No, I

will never violate the law. The 'belly cheer' must be curtailed, and no meat used, on the days commanded by *my* Church."

Before closing this chapter it may be worthy of mention that the higher classes of England imitated in the costliness of their cuisine the profusion of the Roman patricians, especially in their partiality for banquets of fish, in which few could indulge unless possessed of much wealth. "Jack, lucie, or pike" as it is now called, was much esteemed by our ancestors. In the reign of Edward I. the price of "jack" in the London market was double that of salmon, and ten times that of the best sea fish. In the days of Edward III. jack were carefully kept and fed in "stew ponds." Chaucer speaks in commendation of "a supper of jack, washed down with old sack wine." In Henry VIII.'s reign jack "cost as much again as house-lamb in February; and a very small pickerel was dearer than a fat capon." For many generations pike held a place on the royal table, and it was also a favourite dish with the bishops. On one occasion "King Hal" was invited by Archbishop Cranmer to supper, when the monarch playfully inquired after the "bill of fare." Dr. Cranmer first named a savoury dish of jack. "That will do nicely," said the King. "And now for another question. Who will be the chief story-tellers?" continued the convivial monarch. "Dr. Bonner and Roger Ascham," was the reply. Very good, "said the King. Then I will be amongst your guests." The merrie meeting took place at Lambeth Palace, and the company, preceded by the King's torch-men and musicians, did not separate till long after midnight. On those occasions Henry Tudor permitted the utmost latitude

of speech. A good story-teller was always a welcome guest at the royal table; and the King himself had an excellent gift of relating stories of the chase, or of the many strange characters whom his convivial habits brought him acquainted with.

In the days of Cardinal Beaufort, the most sumptuous fish banquets were given by the English bishops, and jack was the favourite dish with the Cardinal. Whilst in the Tower, unfortunate Henry VI. "turned his tears one day to smiles," when his old Cumberland cook announced "a dish of savoury jack" for the poor captive's dinner. And, after so long a lapse in fashion's time, Charles V. enjoyed a fish banquet at Windsor, when the jack was "served up in royal style" before King Henry and Queen Katharine.

Old kindly Izaak Walton, in his work, entitled "A Compleat Angler," gives instructions how to transform a jack by cooking into "a dish of meat too good for any but anglers or very honest men."

In the Sloane MSS. are to be found the recipes followed in the royal kitchens three hundred and sixty years ago, for cooking jack and other fresh-water fish.

CHAPTER XXI.

DR. CRANMER'S LAST ACTS AS A STATESMAN.

IF Archbishop Cranmer believed that his judgment in the case of Katharine of Arragon, and that in reference to Anna Boleyn, were equitable and lawful, he might, indeed, with some consistency, advocate the claim to the Crown of Jane Dudley, as the grand-daughter of Mary Tudor; although the young Queen of Scots, as descended from Margaret, Henry's eldest sister, could claim precedence of Jane and Catharine Gray. According to Cranmer's decisions, both Mary and Elizabeth had been set down as illegitimate; but the King's "last testament" practically abrogated the decision of Dr. Cranmer, at Dunstable, as well as the subsequent pronouncement at Lambeth Palace. In his "will," Henry provided that in case of failure of issue on the part of his son Edward, the Crown should go in succession to his daughters, Mary and Elizabeth. His disposition in that solemn document proves that Henry did not believe in the justice and legality of Cranmer's divorces, though the pliant prelate had pronounced them at his own command. And again, there is now abundant proof that the Archbishop did not himself believe in the equity or legality of his compelled decisions. If Cranmer could be credited with a conscience, this conviction might account for the hesitation which he evinced in signing the document by

which the young King disinherited his sisters ; but the far greater probability is, that he recoiled from the peril of the act, and yielded at length to his fear of Northumberland ; the Duke and his co-conspirators suspected and dreaded each other. The chief of the conspiracy could not act without Dr. Cranmer, nor the Archbishop without the Duke. Northumberland could not forget the manner in which Cranmer at first clandestinely, and then openly, aided him in the overthrow of the Protector Somerset whose Protestantism was more acceptable to the people, because more open, than that of Cranmer. The interests of both duke and prelate seemed not identical at the juncture, but the approaching death of the King brought about an understanding amongst parties who, still from private considerations, hated each other with mutual ardour. The provident hesitation of the Archbishop of Canterbury arose from his conviction that the attempt to raise Lady Jane Dudley to the throne might end in disaster to her supporters. In this he was foreseeing—be it, as his defenders aver, from a sense of justice, or, as others allege, from calculation. When Cranmer at last consented to sign the patent letters for the transfer of the Crown, he stated that he had “*sworn to maintain the ‘will’ of Henry VIII., and if he signed the document in question, then he was a perjured man.*” Northumberland and the Council replied “*that they had also sworn to execute King Henry’s ‘will,’ and if he had a conscience so had they.*”^{*} Cranmer still hesitated, but ultimately complied, for he had good reason to dread the resentment of Northumberland.

^{*} State Papers (Domestic) of the reign of Edward VI. ; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii.

In Strype's Life of Cranmer it is stated that when Queen Mary interrogated the Archbishop as to his treason to her, he said "he did it unfeignedly, and without dissimulation." A contemporary of Cranmer remarks that "the circumstances of the times were critical: Northumberland was as wicked as he was daring; the people divided between the two religions, and Cranmer become timid, and therefore liable to do wrong, just as the Apostles did before him." The man who argued the merits of the Six Articles or any other written assumption, with Henry VIII., could not be deficient in courage. So this "explanation" vanishes before inquiry.*

Mr. Froude looks upon the "good Archbishop" as a man who was never influenced by "vulgar worldly considerations." "While the lay ministers of Edward the Sixth," he observes, "were sowing the wind where the harvest in due time would follow, Archbishop Cranmer, keeping aloof more and more from them and their doings, or meddling in them only to protest, was working silently at the English Prayer Book."†

Let the reader mark this. Strype, the enthusiastic biographer of Cranmer, makes a statement the very opposite to that of Mr. Froude, who has entered the field assegai in hand for his idol, the Archbishop. Strype affirms that "during Edward's reign the Archbishop of Canterbury was very active, and great deference seems to have been given to his judgment by the King and his Council in the matters that were

* See Foxe, vol. ii. p. 372. Burnet (vol. i. p. 258) sustains this view of Cranmer's courage (Defence against Gardyner, p. 286), and represents him as acquiescent in the sentiments of the royal theologian.

† Froude's History of England, vol. v. p. 390.

then transacting, especially concerning the reformation of religion." Strype further adds:—"I find the Archbishop's name very frequently at the Council Board."* The official records of the Council fully bear out Strype. According to the Council Book, the Archbishop attended that assembly with the greatest punctuality," and, "acting as regent, nothing could be done without his presence." Mr. Froude having unconsciously used Strype, writes: "No plunder of Church or Crown had touched the hands of Thomas Cranmer. No fibre of political intrigue, or crime, or conspiracy could be traced to the Palace at Lambeth. He had lent himself, it is true, in his too great eagerness to carry out the Reformation, to the persecution of Bishops Bonner and Gardyner."† This challenge as to Cranmer's unselfishness can at once be answered. Mr. Froude admits that in Henry's reign Cranmer manifested no active opposition to Thomas Cromwell in his measures for the confiscation of monastic property. What part did the Archbishop take in the disposal of the luckless Lord Hussey's domains and manors? Like the Seymours and Dudleys he was surrounded by needy relatives and followers, in whose interest he was, so far, disinterested—facilely profuse in providing for them from the property of others. Did Mr. Froude not know that in the Archbishop's dealings with the diocese of Canterbury he was several times guilty of simony and other actions by no means disinterested? He compelled Archdeacon Warham to resign his office for a certain sum of money, in order to confer it on his own brother, Edward Cranmer—"a man of mean capacity and bad reputation." He further alienated a

* Strype's *Memorials of Cranmer*, vol. i. p. 474.

† Froude's *History of England*, vol. v. p. 390.

number of manors of the see to the King, indemnifying himself by seizing for his private emolument some of the confiscated abbey lands.* On this transaction Dean Hook says: "It will be difficult to justify Cranmer's proceeding with respect to the promotion of his brother Edward." Even Strype leniently admits that Cranmer was "*rewarded by Somerset with a grant of Church lands for his own benefit, and which was to be considered as a compensation for the delicate part he had taken in violating King Henry's will.*"† But what amount of Church property did Cranmer receive in King Henry's reign? Were not the lands attached to Bilsington and Bradsole conferred on him by the King? Was he not—worse than all—likewise the recipient of the plunder of *hospitals*?‡ The King, for instance, presented him with the revenues of the hospital of St. Gregory, founded by the illustrious Lanfranc, the annual rental of which was £166 4s.—a handsome sum in those days. Contemporary records avouch the institution to have been of *extensive benefit to the sick and needy*.§ Henry dismantled it, and abstracted its means, in order to "enable the Cranmer family to appear more respectable." I admit that Cranmer did not, from all the property of the poor which he acquired, appropriate the proceeds to himself and family exclusively. He made the following apportionments to his "other relatives" and "servants"—The priory of Shelford to

* Records of the Monastic Confiscations.

† See Strype's Memorials of Cranmer.

‡ Dr. Whyte on the Fate of the English Hospitals (black letter).

§ "The first Protestant subject," writes Miss Strickland, "who endowed an hospital in England was Lambarde, a learned antiquarian lawyer, author of the Tower Records. In 1601, he founded an hospital, or asylum, at East Greenwich, where twenty poor people were clothed and fed."

his brother-in-law, Harold Rosell, clerk of his kitchen ; the Grey Friars, in Canterbury, to Thomas Cobham, a cousin ; the Priory of Pontefract, to John Wakefield, controller of the household ; Croxden, or Roncester, to his servant, Francis Basset ; and Newstead to another domestic named Markham.* The "offerings" do not end here.

Cranmer's "keeping aloof from the members of Edward's Government," and "working at the Prayer Book," are not borne out by any evidence I have yet seen. Where Mr. Froude obtained his *facts* outside his fancy I cannot imagine. Had Cranmer no share in the councils of Dudley, Paget, Northampton and Dorset ? Tytler, in his "Life of Edward and Mary," and the papers to be found in the Record Office, also differ utterly from the statements put forward respecting Cranmer's abstention from political affairs at this epoch. In fact, he was an active politician.

Ralph Morrice, to whom I have before referred, was long in the service of Dr. Cranmer. He was, as might be supposed, devoted to the Reformation. . Ralph Morrice wrote a Life of Dr. Cranmer, which is still amongst the MSS. at the University of Cambridge. In John Strype's Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer he made extensive use of this valuable history.

In his capacity of a secret correspondent to John Foxe Morrice aided the latter in his "muddled narratives." How far Morrice may be censured for the part he took in Foxe's work it might be difficult to ascertain. He, however, confirms the statements of many of his contemporaries as to the benevolent character of Cranmer. Yet he admits that

* Jenkyn's Cranmer, vol. i. p. 161; J. H. Blunt's Reformation of the Church of England, p. 378.

the Archbishop was extremely cold, almost repulsive in manner to the people whom he sometimes styled "lazy creatures." Be this as it may, the people hated Cranmer on account of the injustice with which he acted towards four of the King's wives.

Morrice was the personal friend of Roger Ascham, whom he described as "an admirable story-teller; a good judge of old pictures, books, and wine." Roger Ascham was known as the convivial companion of both Reformers and Catholics. In Queen Mary's reign Morrice was imprisoned, but escaped from his dungeon.* Upon the accession of Elizabeth he was welcomed back by the English Reformers; and Archbishop Parker became his patron and friend. He had no desire to enter upon a crusade of religious persecution; and retired from the scene. In 1565 he was living in "easy circumstances" at Bakesham, where he entertained Mrs. Whitechurch, once known as Mrs. Cranmer. Ralph Morrice was "a harmless and rather kindly sort of man." He was well acquainted with much of the secret movements of his master in relation to Crumwell and the King, but from a sense of honour and a delicacy of feeling, little considered in those days, he was silent in relation to the history of the Past, and performed the part of the faithful steward to a liberal master.

* Strype's *Memorials of Archbishop Cranmer*, vol. i.

CHAPTER XXII.

DEATH OF EDWARD VI.

At nine of the clock on the night of the 7th of July, 1553, the Boy-King expired. The doctors who opened the body reported that his "blessed Highness had been poisoned, but by whom no one could ascertain."* Subsequent inquiry, however, proved that no poison had been administered.

Perhaps the story concerning the King having been poisoned had its origin in the fact that the noted Robert Dudley was appointed as "a gentleman in waiting" to the monarch a few days before his death. Northumberland was too cunning a politician not to see that the continuance of the King's life till he was of age would enable him to carry out his daring schemes of ambition with greater success. Robert Dudley, therefore, studied the interests of his family, which were decidedly in favour of prolonging the life of the Sovereign. The cause of young Edward's death was doubtless pulmonary consumption.

Archbishop Cranmer officiated at the King's funeral, in Westminster Abbey. The service was performed in English, which gave much offence to the Princess Mary, who considered Cranmer "as the deviser of every insult offered to her." Upon the accession of Mary, she commanded the

* Medical Report to the Council ; Strype's *Memorials*.

celebration of a grand Requiem Mass to be sung in the Tower Chapel for her brother. The restored Bishop of Winchester was the officiating high priest. The colleagues of Northumberland were present on this occasion. Lords Pembroke and Winchester rivalled each other in their professed ardour for the olden religion and their desire to restore it to its former position. The men with whom Lord Pembroke acted in concert but a few weeks previously he now denounced as heretics and traitors. Lord Winchester "admired the Catholic Church for its antiquity, and the army of martyrs and saints it produced; his family always belonged to it."* What other Church did England ever possess? Anon the reader will see more of the career of those flexible Reformers.

The traditions and chronicles of the times furnish many curious incidents alleged in connexion with Edward's death. It may be interesting to the reader of to-day to know that at that period all parties eagerly listened to marvellous relations of "ghosts, omens, monsters, dreams, and evil spirits in the form of black cats, speaking birds, and horrible noises at midnight." It is stated that the King's death was ushered in with "signs and wonders, as if heaven and earth were in labour with revolution." The "hailstones lay in upon the grass in the gardens of London as red as blood."† "Old King Harry's shade was seen at Westminster Abbey." Roger Ascham declared that he heard "a horrible noise the night before the King's death." Bishop Barlow affirmed that "an enormous black dog entered his room where

* Domestic State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign; Strype's Memorials.

† Chronicle of the Grey Friars.

he was reading the Scriptures, the animal, or D——, paced the apartment twice and disappeared." Some years previous, Barlow was "almost certain that his good old master, King Henry of 'blessed memory,' appeared to him in a state of horror." It was reported at Middleton, in Oxfordshire, that a "child had been born with one body, two heads, four feet, and four hands." Another account stated that a number of dogs were howling beneath the Princess Mary's windows. Others would have it that the night previous to the King's death "many of the Reformers were troubled with terrible dreams as to the future."* It is further related, on the authority of Baoardo, that "there came a storm such as no living Englishman remembered. The summer evening grew black as night. Cataracts of water flooded the houses in the city, and turned the streets into rivers; trees were torn up by the roots, and whirled through the air; and a more awful omen still—the forked lightning struck the steeple of a church where the "heretical service" had been read for the first time.† The reader can draw his own conclusions as to these absurd narratives. All parties, however, were equally superstitious, and believed in ghosts and omens. Fortune-tellers also carried on a brisk trade amongst "the young maidens of qualitie," and the burghers' daughters likewise had recourse to the gipsy women to "explain their dreams."

The Reformers generally coincide in praise of King Edward. Dr. Heylin consider him "ill-principled in him-

* Anthony Delabarre, on the Strange Scenes at the Time of the King's Death.

† Baoardo's History of the Revolution in England on the Death of King Edward; Letters of Roger Ascham to Pierre Derengie, concerning the noise heard at midnight by divers people.

self, and easily inclined to embrace such counsel as was offered him." He was reared under bad men, saw no good example, and, being naturally self-willed and vain, he promised, had he lived, to prove that he was in mind, at least, the son of Henry Tudor." The entries in the diary of the young King relating to the trials of his two uncles, go far to show that his character would soon become as stern and pitiless as that of his father. Mr. Froude does not regard the youth as the precocious sage his eulogists describe, but simply considers him "a smart, intelligent boy for his time." This is about the fact. Amongst the many anecdotes of the "wise young King," it is stated that one day, passing the ruins of some monasteries, he inquired from his attendants what the buildings were, and when answered that they were religious houses, dissolved and demolished by his late father for "abuses and crimes," he replied: "Then could not my father punish the offenders, and suffer such goodly buildings to stand, being so great an ornament to this kingdom, and put in their stead better men who might have governed and inhabited them?"* Somerset and Paget, who had gained so much by the "dissolution and demolition," must have smiled grimly at such an unsophisticated question.

It was often said by those who were aware of the peculation and injustice committed by the Council of the King, that when he became a few years older he would bring some rich men to an account as to the means by which they acquired so much wealth. The Dudleys and the Seymours had very little means before they became attached to Henry's Court; but Pembroke and Paget were the most

* Stevenson's State Papers; Domestic Records of King Edward VI.

successful and the most unscrupulous of the plunderers. "Alas, poor boy," said a Hampshire squire, of Edward, "unknown it is to him what acts are made now-a-days; when he comes of age he will see another rule and *hang up* perhaps one hundred of the knaves."

It is said by the partisans of the cause which Edward unconsciously represented, that he was in person beautiful. He "kept a diary in which he sketched the characters of all the chief notables in the nation, all the judges and considerable men in office, their way of living, and their regard to religion. . . . He studied the business of the Mint, with the exchange and value of money. He understood fortifications. He knew all the harbours in his dominions, as also in Scotland and France, and the depth of water going into them. He acquired great knowledge in foreign affairs. He took notes of every thing he heard, which he wrote in Greek characters, that those about him might not understand them, and afterwards copied them out fair in his journal or diary." * What a wonderful boy! How confounded such men as Wolsey, Pace, and Edward Fox would have been in the presence of this marvellous youth!

During Edward's reign a number of distinguished laymen and ladies of the Catholic party were imprisoned in the Tower and the Fleet for "not accepting the new Gospel" as propounded by Archbishop Cranmer and the Protector Somerset. † The persecution of private families for not attending the "Reformed Service" was carried out in the

* The original of Edward's Journal was long preserved in Sir John Cotton's famous library.

† Records of the Prison Houses of the reign of Edward VI.

most vindictive manner; and the seizure of property led to the ruin of many persons of small means.* There was no legal redress for this system of injustice. All those who refused the oath of supremacy had only the alternative of quitting the country or becoming bondsmen. The conduct of the Duke of Northumberland and his followers, from the arrest and judicial murder of Somerset, was unprecedented in the history of oligarchical license. Every department of the Government was mismanaged, and all kinds of speculation and oppression were perpetrated by men who had sworn to faithfully guard the finances, the interests, and the honour of the realm.

* Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. i.

CHAPTER XXIII.

ANOTHER CHANGE OF SCENE.

THE death of young Edward opened up a new phase of social turbulence. Retaliation and vengeance the motto of one party—defiance or dissimulation of the other. The reader has seen the condition of affairs under the Protector Somerset, and the barbarous treatment of the English peasantry. The accession of Mary was the signal for an attempt at rebellion, and there is certainly sufficient excuse for the severity with which the insurrection was extinguished. In this case the cause of Mary and Elizabeth was nearly the same. The Reformers, were, however, rebels by condition, and no constitutional historian, like Hallam, can defend their conduct in Mary's reign. In fact, the character or standing of scarcely one of the leading or subordinate rebels of that period can bear the test of inquiry. "Motives" have been dilated on, but the motives here can be easily defined. Knaves, unprincipled men, political adventurers, came to the front under the mask of reforming religion, without a particle of religion in their hearts. The "Reformation of the Church" was a question which they had never sincerely contemplated, but could not compass, even if the necessity for it existed; they were as indifferent on that head as the "freebooters and soldiers

of fortune" who harried Germany as the "defenders of the pure Gospel." The conduct of the "German Reformers" is even now fearful to contemplate. The "Peasant War," and the iconoclastic Vandalism of the Low Countries sufficiently indicate the fruits of their propagandism. But I must return to England in the reign of Queen Mary.

Bentivoglio, who investigated with critical accuracy the numbers and the professors of the antagonistic creeds marshalled in the arena in Mary's reign, considered those honestly attached either to the Catholic Church, or to the Reformation, as numerically very small. The really disinterested and sincere Catholics he reckons at about one-thirtieth part of the inhabitants; those who would, without the least scruple, become Catholic and compel their tenants and followers to do so, if Catholicity became once more the established religion of the realm, he estimates at four-fifths.*

The degradation in Queen Mary's time of the national character, so far as the politicians and parvenus of her father's reign could effect it, seemed complete. The House of Peers, which a few years before had unanimously embraced the "Reformation," and established it by statute law, as if it were a new form of Christianity, now turned round and almost without a dissentient voice enacted penal laws against the members of the very creed they had themselves so readily abandoned. The House of Peers presented at that sad epoch a sight at once shameful and despicable. Renaud could then vaunt that he had bribed, in the interest of the Emperor, many English peers.† The Venetian

* Bentivoglio on the Condtyion of Religion in England.

† Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.

ambassador likewise represents the nobility and gentry of England, as "utterly unprincipled." Harsh words, but he confirms them by stating that those whom he describes had no other religion than interest, and that, if only permitted to live in license, and derive advantage from the change, they would with *alacrity embrace Mahometanism or Judaism at the bidding of their Sovereign*.^{*} Such was the debasement of the "upper classes," mainly produced by the evil reign of Henry VIII. The Parliament quickly changed, and were almost unanimously in favour of a return to the olden religion. In the Lords every voice was raised in favour of that view. In the Commons, out of three hundred members only twenty-nine were for maintaining the Reformation.[†] Nothing could exceed the outward enthusiasm evinced for Catholicity by the men who had been but *a few weeks before* the patrons of the preachers. No wonder that the unsophisticated preachers exclaimed in their ignorance and fanatic disappointment: "*Alas, alas! we are betrayed and sold by the Parliament men to the Bishop of Rome.*"

The leading Reformers manifested a very unspiritual suppleness, when, on Monday, November 12th, 1554, the Lords and Commons passed a Declaration, drawn up by the "whole Court of Parliament," Sir William Cecil being one of those present, attesting their *sorrow for past proceedings against the Pope; and all acts against him were repealed on condition that his Holiness "would confirm them in their*

^{*} Correspondence of the Venetian Ambassador.

[†] Burnet's Reformation; Strype's Memorials; Turner, vol. x.; Lingard, vol. v.; Froude's History of England, vol. v.

purchases (?) of abbey and chantry lands." * The world knows what sort of purchases were made by the Suffolks, Clintons, Seymours, Russells, and others of the period. The acquisitions of so many "noble" Reformers, were either bestowals, as in the Bedford case, or granted for considerations so insignificant as to make the title a gift. Well, Julian III. actually granted the "prayer" of this venal Parliament;† but Queen Mary was not pleased with the decision, declaring that some of the Crown lands in her possession she would "set apart for the promotion of learning and the support of the destitute of God's creatures."‡ Bishop Gardynere remonstrated with the Queen, and assured her that if she "made such a disposal she would lack money to support her royal position." Her Highness replied, that "she preferred the peace of her conscience to that of ten such crowns as England conferred upon her."§ Mary may have said this, or may not, for Burnet is a questionable authority unless corroborated by writers more truthful than himself. If Mary did say so, Burnet was doing her an unconscious and unintended act of justice. Mary of the sanguinary title was a personally honest woman—her greatest enemies cannot gainsay that—and in her five years' reign the ship of State was tossed about upon the angry sea of passion. She had a strong heart, but not much of a head to guide; yet she honoured and observed probity in financial matters, and she had a conscience, whose absence the long life of her critic has, in his own case, persistently manifested.

* See Dugdale; Parry's *Parliaments of England*, p. 211.

† Pope Julian's Bull. See also Cardinal Pole's Instructions.

‡ *Queens of England*, vol. v.

§ Burnet's *Reformation*, vol. ii. p. 296.

"Conspiracies against the Queen's life," writes Miss Strickland, "abounded at this unsettled time; even the students of natural philosophy were willing to apply the instruments of science to the destruction of Queen Mary."

"I have heard," says Lord Bacon, "there was a conspiracy to have killed the Queen, as she walked in St. James's Park, by means of a burning-glass fixed on the leads of a neighbouring house. I was told so by a great dealer in secrets, who declared he had hindered the attempt. Of all things, the Queen most resented the libellous attacks on her character, which were set in motion by the Reformers. She had annulled the cruel law instituted by her father, which punished libels on the Crown with death.* But, to the Queen's anguish and astonishment, the country was soon inundated with them, both written and printed. One of these documents she had shown to the Spanish ambassador. The Queen could not suffer these anonymous accusations to be made unanswered, and said, with passionate sorrow, that she had always lived a chaste and honest life, and she would *not* bear imputations to the contrary, silently; and accordingly had proclamation made in every county, exhorting her loving subjects not to listen to the slanders that her enemies were actively distributing.† This only proved that the poisoned arrows gave pain "but did not abate the nuisance."‡

Mr. Froude, who draws so startling a picture of the cruelties committed against the Reformers in the reign of

* See Holinshed and Parliamentary Abstracts, which show that Henry VIII. for the first time in England, caused an act to be passed punishing libel against the Sovereign with death.

† Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii. p. 337.

‡ Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. v. p. 273.

Mary, has, nevertheless, the candour thus to describe the state of public feeling produced by the administration of Reforming statesmen like Somerset, Cranmer, and Northumberland, during the brief reign of the Boy-King:—

“The rebellions and massacres, the political scandals, the universal suffering throughout the country, during Edward's minority, had created a general bitterness in all classes against the Reformers. The Catholics could appeal with justice to the apparent consequences of heretical opinion; and when the Reforming preachers themselves denounced as loudly the irreligion which had attended their success, there was little wonder that the world took them at their word, and was ready to permit the use of strong suppressive measures to keep down the unruly tendencies of uncontrolled fanatics.” *

In an antecedent chapter Mr. Froude gives the reader his impression of the face of England, altered from the olden times:—

“To the Universities the Reformation had brought with it desolation. To the people of England it had brought misery and want. The once open hand was closed; the once open heart was hardened. The ancient loyalty of man to man was exchanged for the scuffling of selfishness. The change of faith had brought with it no increase of freedom, and less of charity. The prisons were crowded, as before, with sufferers for opinion, and the creed of one thousand years was made a crime by a doctrine of yesterday. Monks and nuns wandered by the hedge and the highway as missionaries of discontent; and pointed with bitter effect to the fruits of the new belief, which had been crimsoned in the blood of thousands of the English peasants.” †

Dean Hook corroborates these dark portraits drawn by Mr. Froude. “No mistake,” he says, “can be greater than that which would represent the Reformation as a

* Froude's History of England, vol. vi. p. 529. † Ibid., p. 28.

struggle for freedom. This mistake, however, has rendered the name of Protestant dear to the politician, who, regardless of religion, has inscribed 'civil and religious liberty' on the banner of his party." Again, the Dean observes:—
"The notion of religious liberty, or even of toleration, never entered into the minds of any Reformer of the sixteenth century."

Dean Hook forms an accurate opinion of the early Reformers of Edward's reign. He describes them "as a class of men who, with the name of God on their lips, were possessed by the demon of avarice."* This is also a fair and exact description of the Lords and Commons who supported Somerset. Camden and Ratslyffe, have left on record their condemnation of the violent and dishonest conduct of the ultra-Protestant supporters of the Protector. It must not, however, be forgotten that a number of the preachers who dishonoured the name of religion in London, during Edward's reign, were German Reformers, invited to this country by Dr. Cranmer. Dean Hook further states that the "Papal party were determined to maintain their principles by a policy of violence similar to that pursued by the Reformers." Perfectly true; but the Papal party were robbed of their property, and had much greater reason to sternly maintain their principles. In nine cases out of ten the Reformers had no property to forfeit; they were soldiers of fortune, who traded upon a newly adopted religious sentiment, and received grants of land, &c., in proportion to the political services they rendered to the original confiscators. The authorities on this question are

* *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 227.

numerous, and irrefragable.* If the Church had "no property there would have been but a faint cry for its reformation." So said the Puritan, Dr. Coxe, when Bishop of Ely.

As to the state of the country, it may be imagined from the fact that *seventy-two thousand* persons were butchered by the public executioners during the reign of Henry VIII.† An enormous number of wretched people also perished from prison fever, and other dreadful diseases, caused by putrid food, filth, and bad air. The prisons of Elizabeth's reign, however, and the character of the gaolers, stood forth without a parallel in the history of Europe.

Some idea may be formed of the power of the leading nobility at the period of Mary's accession, from the report of M. Michel's visit to England in 1557. Speaking of the squires, knights, and peers, that observant foreigner remarks :—"There is not one amongst those great Englishmen, who, in proportion to his retinue, and the 'facolta' he possesses, has not a store of arms for a considerable number of people ; so that it is said some of them together might arm thousands. As for example, the Earls of Derby, Shrewsbury, and Westmoreland ; but, above all, the powerful Earl of Pembroke." ‡ It is stated that Lord Pembroke once boasted that he could summon to arms in three days ten thousand men, all his own retainers. This statement appears doubtful. It is recorded, however, that a Lord Stanley who figured in the days of the Plantagenets

* Domestic State Papers of Edward VI.'s reign ; Venetian and French Despatches.

† Holinshed's Chronicle, vol. i. p. 186. I select Holinshed as the most correct statistical writer upon this disastrous period.

‡ Ellis's Royal Letters, vol. ii. p. 222.

"could summon twenty thousand men at the sound of his bugle."

Riots excited by religious differences took place at Norwich and other towns. The conduct of the Catholic party was marked by scanty prudence, and many clerics gave way to violent invective. They had of course greater reason to complain than any other section of the community, for in Edward's reign the clergy were plundered, imprisoned, tortured, and in many cases sent to the scaffold. Father Sander censures the Catholic clergy for the course they took during the religious turmoil that existed in Mary's reign. He blames the priesthood for "officiating too hastily in their churches," they "caused a panic and a fright;" "many of them who were actually concerned in the late scheme never considered what censure and disabilities they were subjected to by canon law, and what objections there lay against some of the bishops that ordained them, but rushed through the discipline of the Church, and pressed up to the holy altars without thought or reverence." Sander adds, "For a punishment of this conduct the Queen's reign was shortened, and the face of religion changed."

The Convocation summoned in Mary's reign restored all the former doctrines of the Catholic Church. The proceedings opened with a sermon from that zealous and excellent cleric, Father Harpsfield. A theological discussion upon the "Real Presence" was challenged by the Reformers, who still held a place in Convocation. The arguments were continued for a week; both parties indulged in fierce personality, and the assembly closed, as it commenced, no party being convinced, and much bitter feeling created.*

* Collier's *Ecclesiastical History*, vol. vi. The report of the disputation is still preserved in the archives of the Convocation.

The conduct of itinerant preachers and of the Anabaptist mobs was especially violent. The Queen was denounced in the rudest language at St. Bartholomew's. When a priest attempted to celebrate Mass a rush ensued, and the clergyman was assaulted upon the altar. At St. Paul's, Dr. Bourne, one of the Queen's chaplains, was preaching a sermon on "the state of affairs," when a crowd of refugees, English fanatics, and a large element of "thieves and night prowlers," assembled round the pulpit. When the preacher stated that Bonner was unjustly imprisoned by Edward's Government, a shout was immediately raised of "Papist, Papist, tear him down" "no man from the Pope for us;" a dagger was thrown at the priest; the chief magistrate of the City interposed, but he could not make his way through the vast crowd of excited rioters. Bradford, the preacher, and a few others, saved the priest's life—a good act of an honest, and subsequently ill-treated man. The crowd rushed through the streets with yells of "No Papists." Meetings were then held, and inflammatory placards scattered about the streets. The Spanish envoy describes "the day and night as one of dreadful excitement and danger to the loyal subjects of the Queen." The accounts of those "religious" riots—if the adjective can be used in such company—are, of course, contradictory. It is certain, however, that the class known as Reformers disgraced the name of manhood by their conduct.

"The precipitation with which Somerset, Cranmer, and Northumberland had attempted to carry out the Reformation was followed by a natural reaction. Protestant theology, which had erected itself into a system of intolerant dogmatism, and had crowded the gaols with prisoners who

were guilty of no crime but nonconformity, had now to reap the fruits of its injustice, and was superseded till its teachers had grown wiser." *

"If the Reformation under Edward the Sixth was not a failure, it certainly was not a success. Certain profligate noblemen, most active in the cause, maintained the Reformation in words; but, to all appearance, over their hearts religion had no salutary influence. With the spoils of a plundered Church they had filled their coffers, but for the fruits of the spirit we have too often to look in vain among the Protestants as well as among the Papists." † A notable admission on the part of Dean Hook. Professor Brewer remarks that "the generality of men are too much misled by Foxe in forming anything like a fair and just estimate of the reigns of Edward and his successor. No King ever lived in this nation, except perhaps Henry VIII., *whose reign was more disastrous to the cause of true religion than was the reign of Edward VI.*" ‡ The men who played so fearful a part during the reign of Edward are the very persons whom Foxe, Speed, Burnet, and the Puritan writers of a later time have presented to posterity as "martyrs and saints," God-fearing men, who were "*inspired by the Holy Ghost to reform religion.*" The records of the actions of the Reformers of King Edward's reign at once dispose of the claims set up for the holiness and purity of their lives. It may be asked, were the Catholics a model of perfection at this period? My answer is, that they were very far from what they should have been; but they were always—whilst

* Froude, vol. vi. p. 116.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. x. p. 18.

‡ Dr. Brewer's Notes on Fuller's Ecclesiastical History, book viii. p. 150.

practising their religion—a law-abiding race, who honoured the Monarch and the Constitution. The old English Catholic Conservatives detested revolution; the Reformers loved that ominous word for the gain that its disasters presented to them. The Reformers of King Edward's reign were "rocked in the cradle" of revolution and communism; and, as Mr. Froude remarks, "they had created, by their own misconduct, the difficulty of defending their opinions."* The worst crimes against a well-regulated order of society were perpetrated in the name of the God of Justice, Mercy, and Charity. The Reformers in Edward's reign "came fresh upon the scene." There was no cause for retaliation. They had lost neither life, liberty, nor property by the people who adhered to the "old learning." And, as to property, they had little or none to lose. Let the reader examine the real facts of the case, as drawn from the State Papers and records of the period, and then form his own opinions as to the history of those disastrous times.

* Froude's *History of England*, vol. vi. p. 312.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE TRAITOR BETRAYED.

To the amazement of the nation, the first proclamation issued on the death of King Edward was one announcing a change in the succession, and proclaiming Jane Dudley Queen Regnant. The usurpation and treason of the Council and the regal position of Lady Jane were, however, of brief duration. Northumberland's efforts to induce the country to support the claims of his daughter-in-law were listlessly received. His own subsidized following deserted him, his colleagues wavered, and when he left London the citizens were in no mood to wish him success. The Earls of Sussex and Bath deserted Lady Jane Dudley, and repaired to Framlingham, to salute Mary as Queen. Lords Pembroke, Rich, Winchester, and Sir William Paget quickly joined the winning side.

Northumberland, though at the head of an army at Cambridge, had employed himself rather in polemic than military warfare. He had requested Dr. Edwin Sandys, the Vice-Chancellor of the University, and a very zealous "Reformer," to preach a sermon against Mary's title and her religion; and whilst the sermon was proceeding, a yeoman of the guard held up to public scorn a Catholic

missal, a "grayle" * which had been captured the preceding night at Mr. Huddleston's house, where the Princess Mary had slept, and heard Mass, during her late rapid journey into Suffolk. The next day the news arrived of the popular revulsion in London; and Northumberland, struck with terror, made a bootless effort to imitate his colleagues, by personally proclaiming Queen Mary in Cambridge Market-place, tossing up his cap, while "the tears ran down his cheeks." Dr. Sandys, who stood by him, was a man of indomitable courage, mental and physical, and could scarcely conceal his scorn when the Duke said to him—"Queen Mary is a merciful woman, and that doubtless all would receive the benefit of her general pardon." Dr. Sandys bade him not flatter himself, for if the Queen were ever so inclined to pardon, those who now ruled would destroy him, whoever else were spared. Then occurred a scene of perfidy rarely known in England, and to be equalled only by Monteith's treachery to the patriot Wallace. Sir John Gates, one of Northumberland's agents, most deeply compromised, arrested his master when he was personally helpless, "with his boots half on and half off." In a few hours Northumberland was set at liberty; and at last, all this anarchy was settled by the entry into Cambridge of the Earl of Arundel with a body of the Queen's troops.

When Northumberland heard that Lord Arundel came to arrest him, he "nearly fainted;" then, assuming a

* The present Post-Laureate, in one of those hard-wrought operations of the brain which tax equally the performer and peruser, has familiarized the few who can understand him with his notions on the "holy grail. *Omne ignotum pro magnifico.*

fitting courage, he went to meet his "friend." Arundel looked at him with withering scorn. The Duke fell upon his knees before the Earl, and "prayed for mercy for the love of God." "Consider my soul, good Lord of Arundel; I have done nothing but by the consent of *you* and the whole Council."

"My Lord Duke," said Arundel, "I am sent here by the Queen's Majesty, and in her name I now arrest *you*."

Northumberland again cried out for mercy, reminding his captor that he himself had been guilty of similar *lèse-majesté*. Arundel replied that "he should have sought mercy sooner."

Without much delay the Duke of Northumberland was escorted with the other prisoners to London, and lodged in the Tower.

Several of Northumberland's party, after the arrest of their chief, hastened on to Framlingham, in order to excuse to Queen Mary, under the plea that they were but obeying the orders of the Privy Council. Among those "Loyalists" were the Marquis of Northampton and Lord Robert Dudley. Bishop Ridley likewise presented himself at Framlingham, but was coldly received, and sent back—Fox declares, "on a halting horse" (a homely expression for ill-reception). He was arrested, and with Northampton conveyed to the Tower from the Queen's camp, on the 26th of July, on account of a sermon he had recently preached against her title, at St. Paul's Cross,* when Princess. Ridley had been guilty of several gross personal insults to Queen Mary. He made

* Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii. (first edit.); *Queens of England*, vol. v.; Lingard, vol. v.

himself most obnoxious to her, and continued so to the last. He styled her "an ugly Popish bastard."

Lord Arundel next received orders from the Queen to arrest the Duke of Suffolk and his daughter the Lady Jane Dudley. The Duchess of Suffolk threw herself at the Queen's feet, and begged for mercy on behalf of her husband. She stated that Suffolk was dangerously ill, and to be consigned to a cell in the Tower would cause his death. He was only three days imprisoned when set at liberty.* It is singular how the haughty Duchess of Suffolk almost enjoyed the friendship of the Queen, and yet seems to have made no attempt to save the life of her unhappy daughter, whom, it is said, she always disliked. "No pleadings are recorded," says Miss Strickland, "of the Duchess of Suffolk for her poor daughter, Lady Jane, who might have been liberated on her own parole with far less danger than her wrong-headed father. It was well known that the Duchess was an active agent in the evanescent regality of her daughter, she had urged the ill-starred marriage with the profligate young Dudley; she must have fabricated some tales against her own child, since she was always treated with great distinction by her cousin, Queen Mary, in the worst of times."† The Imperial Ambassador urged the Queen to bring Lady Jane to trial with her father-in-law, Northumberland; and a large number of the so-called Catholic party, who wished for vengeance, and disgraced the Queen by their actions, were "loud in their demands for the blood of Jane," who has been described as the "most

* Holinshed's Chronicle; Goodwin, pp. 332, 333.

† Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. v. pp. 300, 301; *State Papers of Mary's reign*.

innocent of all the guilty." Queen Mary made a general reply to the Catholic party that "she could not find it in her heart or conscience to put her hapless kinswoman to death, who had not been an accomplice of Northumberland, but merely an unconscious, unresisting instrument in his hands. If there were any crime in being his daughter-in-law, even of that her fair cousin Jane was not guilty, for she had been legally contracted to another, and therefore her marriage with Lord Dudley was not valid. As for danger existing from the pretensions of Lady Jane, the Queen considered them imaginary, and every requisite precaution should be taken before she was set at liberty."* Such was the reply given by the Queen to the open and concealed enemies of Lady Jane. Bishops Gardynier and Tonstal, and the Duke of Norfolk, all approved of this benign and merciful policy. But Pembroke, Winchester, Paget, and Rich, "the late supporters and Council of Lady Jane," were determined to take another course in their new-born zeal for Queen Mary. Jane's mother remained silent, whilst her father showed his gratitude for the royal mercy by forming fresh conspiracies. Lady Jane Dudley sent a letter of explanation to the Queen, in which she minutely detailed the coercion which was used towards her by Northumberland and her own family. "She refused (she averred) the Crown, and asserted the injustice of the whole proceeding; she would have nothing to do with their evil deeds. They told her that by virtue of the King's will she was Queen Regnant of England. Her sense of justice and honour could not believe in such arrangements;

* Abridged from Pollino, *Istoria del' Ecclesia d'Inghilterra*, p. 78.

she knew nothing of the doings of the Council." She was again reminded of "her duty." "She fell to the ground and swooned as one dead. She remained a passive victim to the ambition of her father-in-law." She concludes her narrative by describing the conduct of young Dudley and his mother: "*I was maltreated by my husband and his mother.*"

There is sadly ample reason to believe in the accuracy of the above statement, which has been chronicled by three Italian historians, who seem to have had special sources of information at the time. Miss Strickland and other eminent English writers accept it as a true narrative, and later research places the statement beyond doubt.

Several instances are to be found of Queen Mary's interference to save persons from the cruel fates of her Privy Council. Those who were of rank or consequence sufficient to gain access to her were tolerably sure of her protection. This peculiarity gave a tone to her reign which renders its character singular in English history; for examples of political vengeance were made chiefly in reference to persons whose station seemed too lowly for objects of State punishment, because, being poor and obscure, they were not able to carry complaints to the foot of the throne. Thus the Council sent orders to the town of Bedford, "for the punishment of a woman ('after due examination of her qualities') by the cucking-stool, she having been arrested for railing and speaking unseemly words of the Queen's Majesty." These awards of personal punishment without regular trial, emanated from a junta of the Privy Council, whose assumption was to sit in the Star Chamber in Westminster Palace, and apportion the inflictions which seemed

good in their eyes, as vengeance on personal affronts offered to the reigning monarch. Much of the extortions of the reign of Henry VII., and the bloodshed of that of Henry VIII., may be attributed to the operations of this unconstitutional and inquisitorial tribunal. But when it condescended to doom an old woman of a little provincial town to the "cucking-stool," it might have been thought that derision would have disarmed its terrors for ever. Such might have been the case, had the newspaper press of the present day been in operation. In the latter part of Mary's reign, when she was utterly incapacitated by mortal sufferings from interference with their proceedings, her cruel ministers inflicted many punishments on old women who "railed against the Queen's Majesty."* The women in question were either fanatics or lunatics, for the religious frenzy had created many boisterous idiots.

Lady Jane Dudley was committed to the Tower; and those who so recently shouted, "Long live Queen Jane!" were now preparing to give a splendid reception to Mary Tudor as Queen Regnant of England. The public men who acted in this spirit were the *Reformers of "yesterday."* Nothing could exceed the dishonesty and inconsistency of the populace in those sad times.

* *Queens of England*, vol. v. (first edit.) p. 307. Mary, in fact, was a nullity in the hands of bold and unscrupulous ministers then—as some monarchs have been since.

CHAPTER XXV.

TRIUMPH OF LEGITIMACY.

QUEEN JANE had the army, the fleet, and the great nobles on her side. For some days the people rested in an ominous silence: then a sudden burst of feeling echoed through the land—"for Queen Mary; for Queen Mary." Papal Catholics and Reformers rushed to the Tudor standard. Mary was, at this time, as popular as Northumberland was detested. The people became excited; it was reported that the Council had betrayed the country to France, and "Ireland was to be given over to the French King." * These reports were, of course, mere inventions, but they had an effect upon the popular mind hostile to Northumberland and Lady Jane Dudley. Lady Jane was unconscious of the desperate position in which her relatives and friends had placed her. The feeling of the London people permeated the counties, and reached the country squires. The baronial lords "reconsidered the case. They had been always true to the Tudor dynasty, and why set it aside for the daughter of Henry Gray." Many influential men argued in this fashion. It was not a question of religion, as often

* Scheyfrie's Despatches to Charles V.

alleged, but one of loyalty to the throne. And now the fleet unexpectedly declared for the Queen. The army sent to convey the Princess Mary to London as a prisoner, proclaimed her as their Sovereign. In the provinces all seemed to go in favour of the lawful heir to the Crown. In London there was a large amount of uncertainty. Cranmer and Ridley did their utmost to fan the blaze of sectarian hatred against the Princess Mary. The vilest epithets were applied to her at Paul's Cross; the fanatical and the "Hot-Gospel" * preachers were sent forth along the highways to scatter sedition and treason broadcast in the name of God, of Peace, and of Charity." The results were most lamentable. Bishop Ridley may fairly be set down as the instigator of this state of things. His treason was wilful and deliberate. It has been contended that he was led to such "unconstitutional conclusions" by Dr. Cranmer. There is no proof of this statement; but it is certain that Cranmer reluctantly joined in the agitation put forward by Ridley in London against the claims of the Princess. Ridley was the personal enemy of Mary Tudor; Cranmer was the same; yet the latter's sagacity led him to believe that the country would reject Lady Jane Dudley. Still he had not the courage to oppose the transfer of the Crown to the House of Dorset.

The monarchical feeling always strong in London, now

* The name of "Hot-Gospeller," frequently occurs in these pages. The term was first applied to Mr. Edward Underhill, a Worcestershire gentleman, for his zeal in the Calvinistic crusade. He was, however, very unlike the great majority of the Reformers of Edward and Mary's reign; he was chivalrously loyal to his Queen. He had also some "courtly attractions," being one of the most exquisite performers on the lute in England.

burst forth in favour of the daughter of Katharine of Arragon; that royal lady whom tradition still associated with the happiest and the most virtuous days of the English Court. The long sufferings of the Princess, the oppression and insult heaped upon her by the members of her brother's Government, and their treasonable conduct to her, made her an object of sympathy to all the law-abiding citizens, who dreaded the revolutionary juntas of selfish adventurers who so lately brought the country to the verge of ruin.

The Queen was, on the 3rd of August, escorted from Wanstead by great numbers of nobles and ladies, who came to grace her entrance into her capital. A foreigner who was an eye-witness, thus describes her appearance on this occasion:—"Then came the ladies, married and single, in the midst of whom rode Madame Mary, Queen of England, on a small white ambling nag, the housings of which were fringed with gold. The Queen was dressed in violet velvet. She seemed to be about forty years of age, and was rather fresh-coloured."

One thousand gentlemen, in velvet coats and richly embroidered cloaks, preceded the Queen. The Princess Elizabeth, who was an object of general admiration, rode beside the Queen.

The Venetian Ambassador states that there were at least seventy thousand people in the procession, of whom some fifteen thousand were women.

The old City portal of Aldgate, at which the Queen made her entrance into the metropolis, was hung with gay streamers from top to bottom; over the gateway was a stage with seats, on which were placed the humble children

of the Spital, singing sweet choruses of welcome to the victorious Queen ; the street of Leadenhall, and all down to the Tower, through the Minories, " was clean swept and spread with gravel," and was " lined with all the crafts in London, in their proper dresses, holding banners and streamers." The Lord Mayor with the mace, was ready to welcome the Queen ; and the Earl of Arundel, with the sword of State, did homage to Mary.

When the Queen entered the precincts of the Tower, a touching sight presented itself to her. Kneeling on the green before St Peter's Church were the State prisoners, male and female—Catholic and Protestant—who had been detained in the Tower during the reigns of Henry VIII. and Edward VI.*

There was Edward Courtenay, the heir to the Earldom of Devonshire, now in the pride of manly beauty, who had grown up a prisoner from his tenth year, without education ; there was another early friend of the Queen, the unfortunate Duchess of Somerset ; there was the aged Duke of Norfolk, still under sentence of death, and the deprived Bishops of Durham, Winchester, and London. Dr. Gardyner addressed " a congratulation and supplication," to the Queen in the name of all. Mary burst into tears as she recognised them, and extending her hands to them, she exclaimed, " Ye are my prisoners." † The Queen raised them one by one, kissed them, and gave them all their liberty. The bishops were restored to their sees ; Gardyner was sworn into the

* After the death of Mary, the Tower was very seldom used as a royal residence ; the usual procession from the fortress to Westminster Abbey, was set aside by James II. ; nor have any of the succeeding sovereigns resided there.

† State Papers of Mary's reign.

Queen's Privy Council.* The Duke of Norfolk and the Earl of Devonshire were restored to their rank and estates.

Gertrude, Marchioness of Exeter, mother of Courtenay, was made Lady of the Bedchamber. The Duchess of Somerset was liberated, and her daughters, Lady Jane, Lady Margaret, and Lady Mary Seymour, were appointed Maids of Honour. They were considered the most learned and accomplished ladies in Europe, excepting the Queen herself, and Lady Jane Dudley. The heirs of the three gentlemen, who had suffered with the Protector Somerset, were reinstated in their property; and as Somerset's adherents were zealous "Protestants," these actions of Mary, which indubitably sprang from her own free will, being at this juncture uncontrolled by Council or husband, ought to be appreciated by those who are willing to test her character by facts.†

The Queen published a pacific manifesto, exhorting each party to refrain from reviling by the epithets of "idolater and heretic;" but her proclamation had little effect on either side, and Catholic and Protestant evidently desired to continue the sectarian strife to the disgrace of the country. Still, the picture has been overdrawn by Puritan writers.

The only State prisoner who was detained in the Tower on this occasion was the noted Geoffrey Pole, that base betrayer of his brother and his friends, and by whose evidence Lord Montague and the Marquis of Exeter had been brought to the scaffold. All the favour which Pole received from Henry VIII. for his unnatural conduct to

* Privy Council Book.

† Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. v. p. 304.

his relatives and friends, was that of perpetual imprisonment in a dungeon. It is stated, that "neither Edward, Mary, nor Elizabeth stretched forth a hand to release him, and his punishment ended only with his miserable existence." There seemed to have been a universal feeling of execration against Geoffrey Pole. It was rumoured early in the reign of Elizabeth that Geoffrey Pole had escaped from the Tower; or perhaps was permitted to retire from the country. Maurice Chauncey positively states that he saw Pole at Antwerp, where he practised medicine. I think it is more probable that the man Chauncey had known in Antwerp was Pole's son, Baptist Lionel, whose mother had been a domestic attached to the Tower in the days of Henry VIII. So wrote Thorndale, the friend of honest Maurice Chauncey.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND'S FATE DECIDED.

ONE of the first acts of the new Government was to issue a special Commission for the trial of Northumberland, Lord Warwick, Lord Ambrose Dudley, Lord Northampton, Sir John Gates, Sir Thomas Palmer, and others of less note. On the 18th of August, 1553, Northumberland and his companions were arraigned in Westminster Hall, the Duke of Norfolk presiding. The trials occupied a short time. Northumberland confessed his guilt; Lords Northampton and Warwick came next. The former said he had been "amusing himself in the country, and had nothing to do with giving away the Crown, but acknowledged that he was a rebel to his lawful Sovereign." The young Lord Warwick declared that he acted on his father's instructions, and that he would now share his fallen fortunes. Seven were condemned to death on this occasion, but only three suffered—namely, Northumberland, Sir John Gates, and Sir Thomas Palmer.*

The Duke of Norfolk passed sentence of death upon Northumberland, who protested against the "haste" with which the Government acted in his case.

* Harleian MSS. 284; Queen Jane and Queen Mary, pp. 18, 19; Froude's *History of England*, vol. vi. pp. 68, 69.

"No matter what you may protest," said the President of the Court, "you must die on the scaffold the death of a traitor; a perjurer and a rebel."* An unfeeling address.

Upwards of seventy rebels, the unfortunate followers of Northumberland, were found guilty and executed. The Queen pardoned four hundred others who were led into her presence by the public executioners, each carrying a rope in his right hand—an old device of King Henry.

In a conversation with Sir Anthony Browne, in the brief interval between his fall and death, Northumberland said that "he was naturally inclined to belong to the olden religion of England, but when he saw the great change at hand, he was under the impression that it would be better to adopt the new order of things; that still he hesitated, but ultimately embraced in full the principle of siding with the strongest, explaining in his own quaint candid avowal, 'Pull dog, pull devil,' whoever succeeded should have his adhesion."† This ambitious man was known in Edward's reign to have no other religion than interest; and it is stated that on one occasion he spoke with such contempt of the merits of the "new learning," that Archbishop Cranmer "challenged him to a duel."‡ Cranmer's "challenge to a duel", originated with his secretary, Morrice, or Roger Ascham, both friendly gossippers. Apart from his clerical office, altogether, Cranmer was not the man to fight duels. He was too fond of his family and the social comforts of Lambeth Palace to

* State Papers of Queen Mary's reign.

† Letter of Sir Anthony Browne; Strype; Tytler; Queens of England, vol. v.

‡ Parker, Ant. Brit., p. 341; Strype's Memorials. vol. i. p. 430.

risk his life for, of all things, a religious controversy, after having escaped so many storms in the former reign. But there was no disagreement of action between the Archbishop and his now fallen co-conspirator; and whatever difference of opinion existed between them as to the merits of creeds, they both pulled steadily together to overthrow the olden religion. It was likewise an established understanding between both never to quarrel where their worldly interests were concerned.

When in power, Northumberland offered the bishopric of Rochester to John Knox in order to silence that fanatic, perhaps lunatic agitator, but Knox declined his favour, declaring him to be "a hypocrite in religion, and that if he had any real sentiments of Christianity in his heart, he was still attached to the fabric of Rome."* The sequel proved that Knox had formed a correct estimate of the Duke. Whilst under sentence of death in the Tower, Northumberland was visited by Bishop Gardiner, to whom he solemnly declared that he was a Catholic—that *he had always been one in his heart, and that he did not believe in any one of the doctrines that he professed and enforced in Edward's reign.* He besought Gardiner on bended knees to spare him. "Alas, alas," he mournfully ejaculated, "is there no help for me? Oh, good bishop—oh, anointed servant of God, let me live a little longer to do penance for my sins! Oh, spare me—spare me, good father! Tell the Queen that I will be the most humble and faithful of her subjects, and that I will go forth to proclaim her titles and virtues in every end of the realm." Strype avers that

* Burnet's Reformation; Letter of John Knox, to Bishop Horne.

Northumberland's supplications to Gardyner "partook of an abject condition of mind." "Alas, alas!" let me live a little longer, though it be in a mouse-hole." Dr. Gardyner replied that "he wished it were in his power to give him that mouse-hole, but it should be the best palace he possessed."* Bishop Gardyner was moved to pity; he promised to intercede with the Queen, and found Mary inclined to mercy; but it is alleged that Northumberland's implacable personal enemy, Renaud, boasted of his having overcome the Queen's clement tendencies, and hurried on the execution. The confidential despatches of Renaud are at variance with these statements, for he laments the spirit of retaliation and vengeance which disgraced the English character at this period. We have also the statement of Commendone, the Legate of Julius the Third, who alleges that he was about leaving London, when the Queen "insisted on his stopping two days longer that he might have the pleasure of witnessing the execution of the traitor Dudley." Some historians deny that Mary ever said so; but, forgiving as she might be—even when under the influence of religion—she was every inch a Tudor, and although the report may be surcharged, it is not improbable. Northumberland had, however, sinned deeply against her as religionist, woman, and Queen. It was not in human nature that she could forget and forgive the too recent message he had sent to her, reminding her "that she was *illegitimate, old, and deformed, belonging to an idolatrous religion*, a person unfit to be a Queen, and should there-

* State Papers of Mary's reign; Gardyner's letter to the Queen on the "grief at Northumberland for his treason."

fore submit to her sovereign lady Queen Jane.”* This was not language for a Tudor to forget. When the first Council of Lady Jane Dudley’s short-lived Government was summoned, the Duke of Northumberland spoke of the Princess Mary in these words:—“His late Majesty (Edward) had prayed on his death-bed that the Almighty God would protect the realm from false opinions, and especially from those of his unworthy sister, Mary. The King reflected that both the Lady Mary and the Lady Elizabeth had been cut off by Act of Parliament from the succession as illegitimate. The Lady Mary had been disobedient to her father; she had again been disobedient to her brother; she was a capital and principal enemy of God’s Word, and both herself and her sister Elizabeth were bastards.”† This speech of Northumberland was duly repeated to Mary three days subsequently by one of Northumberland’s own Council—one of his personal friends. Tytler, and other recent authorities, are of opinion that there can be little doubt that, “from the first, the Queen’s resentment was so strong that she had determined to strike off Northumberland’s head.” In fact, he was the enemy of the Tudor family, and those who applauded his treason to Mary must have known that he was also as great a traitor to Elizabeth.

Gregorio Leti states that the Princess Elizabeth wrote to the Duke at this period “full of indignation for his treason to her sister and herself.” She likewise denounced Lady Jane Dudley as a rebel; and subsequent circum-

* State Papers of Mary’s reign; Tytler’s *Edward and Mary; Queens of England*, vol. v. (first edit.)

† State Papers of Edward VI.’s reign.

stances proved that Elizabeth never forgot the blow struck at her sister and herself by the aspiring House of Dorset.

Northumberland seemed to have more than a common fear of death. The night before his execution he wrote a supplicating letter to Lord Arundel, in which he besought his life to be spared on any condition. "Yea, the life of a dog," he wrote, "that I may live to kiss the Queen's feet."* Three days before his execution, he had voluntarily expressed his desire to return to his former creed. Now all earthly hope had passed away, and he earnestly set about preparation for his doom. The last Mass at which Northumberland and his condemned associates were present was celebrated by Dr. Heath, Bishop of Worcester, and from this prelate the Duke and his companions received Holy Communion.† "The prisoners," writes a spectator, "bent on their knees one to another to ask pardon, and the Duke knelt before each of them to seek their forgiveness. 'I am,' said he, 'the wicked wretch who has brought you all to this terrible end. Oh, brothers, forgive me!'" Morrice states that the scene was most affecting. Northumberland prayed earnestly. Several times he said—"Mother of God, pray for me a wicked sinner."

Mr. Hepworth Dixon's version of the scene in the Tower differs from several previously accepted authorities. "The block," Mr. Dixon states, "was got ready; the headsman waited with his axe. The Duke of Northumberland made a feint, which put off the evil hour. He felt sore of mind

* State Papers of Mary's reign; Tierney's Hist. and Antiq. of the Castle of Arundel, p. 333.

† Harleian MS.; Despatches of the Spanish Ambassador.

on account of his change of faith ; he had a great desire to hear Mass, as in his youthful days ; he begged to receive his ' Maker ' from the hands of a priest. Here was a change. . . . The Tower priests were sent for. Palmer and Gates followed the example of Northumberland. When young Lord Warwick heard that his father had returned to the olden religion, ' heard Mass, confessed, and received Holy Communion,' he expressed a desire to become reconciled to the creed of his childhood. He immediately requested the presence of a confessor. Robert Dudley also recanted. The other prisoners, with a few exceptions, acted in a similar manner."* Yet Foxe speaks of the firmness with which *all* adhered to the Reformation principles :—"They died valiant soldiers of Christ." Such was the cant of the time ; arrogating the Redeemer as the sole patron of a new sect. Again the martyrologist is in error, for only a few of those " specially condemned " were executed. The Earl of Warwick died of a sudden illness in the Tower ; Robert Dudley, and all those who publicly renounced the Reformation in Mary's reign, returned to Protestant observances upon the accession of Elizabeth. According to the secret despatches of De Quadra, Robert Dudley, when Earl of Leicester, suggested a plan for restoring Catholicity to England in the reign of Elizabeth : nevertheless, he professed to be a Protestant at the same time ; but then he was a Dudley, and the lover of a young Queen.

At thirty minutes past ten of the clock, on Tuesday morning, 22nd of August, 1553, the "tolling of divers big bells, and then the roll of a drum," announced to the existed

* State Papers of Mary's reign ; Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.

crowds on Tower Hill that the Duke of Northumberland and his companions were approaching. The Duke walked with a firm step, but looked pale and dejected. Bishop Heath stood beside him, crucifix in hand. As usual, Northumberland's dress was courtly and magnificent; and he ascended the scaffold with courage and dignity, repeating the prayers of the bishop and clergy in a clear and distinct voice. The prisoners knelt down with the bishop and priests present. Then a pause of some minutes occurred, and, as Pomeroy states, "the populace were unusually decent in their conduct." When the party rose from their devotions, the bishop and priests retired a short distance, and the prisoners advanced to the front of the scaffold. Sir John Gates first addressed the vast multitude. He said he deserved a thousand deaths; he begged the forgiveness of all those whom he had injured, and especially that of the man whom he had so basely betrayed. He had lived viciously, and as wicked all his life as any man in the world; and yet he was a great reader of the Scriptures; but a worse follower of their maxims there was not living. *He read the Scriptures not to edify, but to dispute, and to make interpretations after his own fancy.* He exhorted the people to take heed how they read God's Word, and played and gamed with God's holy mysteries. Unless they humbly submitted themselves to God, and *read His Word charitably and to the right intent to be edified thereby, it would be poison to their souls.*

The following version of Sir John Gates' speech has been furnished by Ramsay, a Baptist preacher:—

"Good people, my coming here this day is to die; whereof I assure you all, I am well worthy; for good people, I assure you that

I have lived as viciously and wickedly as any man hath done in this world of sin. I was the greatest reader of Scripture that might be of a man of my degree or station; and a worse follower of the said Scripture there was not living. I did not read the Scripture to be edified thereof; nor to seek the glory of God; but contrarywise, arrogantly to be seditious, and dispute thereof, and privately to interpret it after my own brain and affection, and to suit my passions. Wherefore good people, I exhort and pray you all to beware how, and often, with what sort of feeling you come to read God's Holy Word with. For be assured, good people, that it is not a trifle, or playing game to deal with God's holy mysteries. Stand not too much in your own conceit; for, like as a bee of one flower gathers honey and the spider poisons the same, even so *you*, unless you humbly submit yourselves to God, and charitably read the same to the intent to be edified thereby, it is to you as poison and worse; good people, it were better to let it alone. I ask you all to remember me in your prayers to the Lord Jesus; and beg the intercession of our Blessed Lady, the Queen of Heaven. And now I put an end to my talk to you by bidding you all farewell. Remember my sad fate; practise your grand old religion, and be loyal and true to your Queen."

The "repentant Catholic," in this case, was an infamous being in Edward's reign. He persecuted and plundered in the name of the "new learning;" which, according to his own words, he never believed in. The aged Duke of Norfolk was one of his victims; yet Gates was not worse, nor even half so bad as several members of Edward's Council. He was, however, quite willing to betray his friends to the Queen, in order to save his own life; but retributive justice pursued him, and he ascended the same scaffold with the man whom he had treacherously sold, and when on the threshold of eternity sought his forgiveness. What good cause could be promoted by such agencies?

Sir Thomas Palmer regretted his crimes against the

Queen, and besought the prayers of the people. He made an affecting allusion to the piety of his early youth and the lessons of a good mother.

Strype contends that, although Gates and Palmer attended Mass that morning and received Holy Communion with Northumberland, nevertheless, at the scaffold they were staunch Protestants. A statement like this involves a charge of ineffable infamy, on this, I hope, unconscious assertion. Strype adopts the assertion of Foxe, who has given so many imaginative scenes in cell and on scaffold, at a time when he himself was a traitorous exile in Switzerland. What manner of men would Foxe make of Gates and Palmer, who an hour before had partaken of Holy Communion, and died declaring their Catholicity? The ascription of such terrific duplicity is one of Foxe's most wicked lies.

The Duke of Northumberland coming to the front of the scaffold, surveyed the vast crowd for some minutes. A hoarse murmur issued from the spectators, followed by a subdued moan and the lamenting cry of "Poor fellow ! poor fellow !" The Duke sadly smiled at the exclamation of pity, and having waved his hand towards the people, a death-like silence followed, and he made his "farewell explanation" to all parties in these words:—

"Good people—Hither I am come this day to die. I confess to you all that I have been an evil liver, and I have done wickedly all the days of my life ; and most of all against the Queen's Highness, of whom I here openly ask forgiveness" (bending his knees) ; "but I am not alone the original doer thereof, I assure you, for there

* Harleian MSS. ; Tytler's *Edward and Mary* ; *State Trials* ; Pomeroy, Hales and Griffin.

were some others which procured the same; but I will not name them, for I will not now hurt any man. And the chiefest occasion hath been *through false and seditious preachers that I have erred from the Catholic faith and true doctrine of Christ.** For, good people, there is, and hath ever been since Christ, one Catholic Church, which Church hath continued from Him to his disciples in one unity and concord, and so hath always continued from time to time until this day, and yet doth throughout all Christendom, only us excepted, for we are quite gone out of that Church. For whereas all holy fathers, and all other saints throughout Christendom, since Christ and His disciples, have ever agreed in one unity, faith, and doctrine, *we alone dissent from their opinions, and follow our own private interpretation of Scriptures.* Do you think, good people, that we, being one parcel in comparison, be wiser than all the world besides, ever since Christ? No, I assure you; you are far deceived. I do not say so from any great learning that I have, for God knoweth that I have very little, or none, but for the experience which I have had. I pray you to recollect that since the death of King Henry VIII. into what misery we have been brought, what open rebellion, what sedition, what great division hath been throughout the whole realm; for God hath delivered us up to our own sensualities, and every day we wax worse and worse. Look also in Germany, since they severed from the faith; into what *a miserable state they have been brought, and how the realm is decayed.* And herewith I have braved these preachers for their doctrine, and they were not able to answer any fact thereof, no more than a little boy. They opened the

* In Strype, vol. ii. pp. 917-918, is to be seen the last speech of Northumberland; at the close of his address he states that "the principles of the Holy Catholic Church were in his heart." In another passage he says he was "seduced away from it by lewd preachers." The reader will remember that Lord Cromwell used the words "seduced from the Church," in his scaffold speech. There have been several versions published of Northumberland's "scaffold speech." In a memoir printed in Antwerp, in 1559, he censures Lord Pembroke severely, and states that he was the person who did most injury to Lady Jane Dudley. In neither version of this remarkable retraction is to be found an allusion by name to any of Northumberland's former associates. This circumstance makes the authenticity of the Antwerp book rather doubtful.

books, and could not reply to them again. More than that, good people, you have in your creed, '*Credo Ecclesiam Catholicam*,' which Church is the same Church which hath continued ever from Christ, throughout all the apostles, saints, and doctors' times, and yet doth, as I have said before; of which Church I do now openly profess myself to be one, and do steadfastly believe therein. I speak unfeignedly, from the very bottom of my heart. This good man, the Bishop of Worcester, shall be my witness" [the bishop said, "Yea."] "And I beseech you all bear me witness that *I die therein, and I do think if I had this belief sooner I had never come to this pass*; wherefore, I exhort you all, good people, take you all example of me, and forsake this new doctrine betimes. Defer it not long, lest God plague you as He hath me, which now suffer this vile and terrible death most worthily. I have no more to say, good people, but of all those whom I have offended I ask forgiveness; and they who offended me I forgive, as I hope God may forgive myself. I trust the Queen's Highness hath forgiven me; when, as I was with force and arms against her in the field, I might have been rent in pieces without law, her Highness the Queen hath given me time and respect to have judgment, and prepare for to approach the Eternal Judge."*

At the conclusion of this remarkable address, the Duke of Northumberland made the sign of the cross in the sawdust on the scaffold, and then stooped and kissed the symbol of the faith. Turning to the headsman he said, "I am now ready. Let you and your assistants perform the part allotted to you." In a few minutes more, having submitted himself with graceful resignation to the headsman, the soul of Thomas Dudley, Viscount Lyle, Earl of Warwick, and Duke of Northumberland, passed away.

Sir John Gates declined to have his eyes bandaged. The scene that followed was horrible. He received three heavy

* Harleian MS. 284, fol. 187; Notes on State Trials.

blows before his head fell off. Ralph Morrice, who was present, states that Sir Thomas Palmer, who had been looking on at the butchery of his friends, advanced to the headsmen, saying—"My turn comes next." His hands were clasped in prayer for a few minutes; and turning to the multitude of heads below, in a faint voice he uttered, "good people, pray for me." The Sheriff then handed him over to the executioners. The work was brief—at one blow the head of the gallant Thomas Palmer was severed from the body. The proceedings concluded with the barbarous legal process of presenting the "head of a traitor" to the people assembled.

A faithful retainer, whom it is said Northumberland neither cared for nor loved, waited on Queen Mary at Richmond, and asked for the head of his master. "In God's name," said the Queen, "take the whole body as well, and give your lord proper burial." And John Cock buried his master in St. Peter's in the Tower, side by side with Somerset, whom historians have called his victim, but which historic justice now reckons as a fellow offender against equity.

John Stow records the following:—"There lieth before the high altar in St. Peter's Church, at the Tower, two Dukes between two Queens—to wit, the Duke of Somerset and the Duke of Northumberland, between Queen Anna and Queen Catherine (Howard), all four beheaded." This statement of Stow was nearly borne out by the discovery of some skeletons in St. Peter's Chapel, in the Tower, during 1876.

A writer of the reign of Elizabeth makes another allusion to the last resting-place of Somerset:—"Northumberland

suffered at the very same block that his friend Somerset did sometime previous ;" and again, "it was his fate to be laid under the same stone, in the very same grave, where they now lie side by side, as good friends, that living were irreconcilable enemies. Two headless Dukes lying between two headless Queens, each as far divided in religion as they were in their affections." The two Queens were Anna Boleyn and Catharine Howard, and it is almost needless to repeat that both lived and died Catholics.

The Catholic party were much surprised by the scene on the scaffold, whilst the friends of the Reformation were "disconcerted and disedified" by so solemn a repudiation on the part of one who had been a leading champion of their proceedings for the previous sixteen years. Foxe asserts that the Duke "merely made a recantation of Protestantism to save his life, being trapped up by some Popish priest to do so." Tytler observes that there is no authority for this statement of Foxe ; and Burnet "opined" that if the Duke were really attached to any religion it was to that of Rome. A late writer, however, avers that the Duke was "either under the influence of the superstitions of Popery, or else an atheist, for otherwise he could not have made such a statement on the scaffold." *Me judice judico* is pitiable logic.

Northumberland made friends among many distinguished men of his time. Early in life he became the favourite of "King Henry's favourite," Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk. He then entered the high road to fortune ; he exhibited those talents which were propelled by an ambition that carried him to his perilous height of greatness. Patronized by Wolsey, he had the worldly good fortune not

only to escape the consequences of his patron's fall, but to ingratiate himself with Crumwell at the time of that Minister's accession to so much of the Cardinal's power ; and when Crumwell in his turn was disgraced and decollated (convertible terms at the time), Dudley's barque, so far from being wrecked by the fate of his friend, caught in its sails the breath of royal favour, and was steered on its independent way more swiftly than before.* To sum up the estimate of this notable man's character. Notwithstanding his recantation on the scaffold, I cannot overlook the fact that his speech was an acknowledgment of evil-doing which had become irreparable ; nor forget this truth, that of all the bad men of the bad Council of Edward VI., the Duke of Northumberland was about the very worst.

In 1549, Northumberland "appointed himself," to be Lord of the Marches of South Wales. In the topography of Ludlow he is thus noted : "He acquired a high position in history, without exciting either pity or respect." Amongst the confiscated property seized upon by this most unprincipled man was that of the extensive estates of the unfortunate historical family of Percy ; but neither Mary nor Elizabeth would permit the Percy property to remain in the hands of the Dudleys.

When Northumberland's rebellion had been suppressed, and Queen Mary had taken possession of the seat of Government, Archbishop Cranmer remained unmolested, having merely received an order to "confine himself to the palace at Lambeth during the Queen's pleasure." Intelligence having reached him that the Catholic service was ordered

* Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. i. p. 2.

by the Queen to be restored in Canterbury Cathedral, he expressed his indignation in no measured terms, and sturdily denounced the olden faith. On the other hand it was reported that the Archbishop "offered to celebrate Mass before the Queen." Cranmer, on becoming aware of this statement, quickly hastened to deny its truth, and in doing so spoke with scant courtesy of his Sovereign. He stated that the "Mass was the device and invention of the Father of Lies, who was even then persecuting Christ, His Holy Word, and His Church; that it was not he (Cranmer), but a false, flattering friar and deceitful monk (Dr. Hornden), who had restored the olden worship to Canterbury; that he had never offered to celebrate Mass before the Queen, but was willing, with her permission, to show that it contained many errors; and with the aid of Peter Martyr, to prove that the doctrine and worship established under Edward VI. was the same which had been believed and practised in the first ages of the Church."* Cranmer had numerous copies of this letter circulated, and it caused immense excitement amongst the people, who detested the Archbishop. He was immediately summoned before the Queen's Council, several of whom belonged to the late Government. Here he presented "a bold and uncompromising appearance before his former friends." After two days' discussion he was committed to the Tower on the charge "of high treason and divers other great crimes." In the Tower he remained three years, but under little or no restraint—in fact he might have escaped to Germany if he wished to do so. This was just what Gardynier desired. It is stated that Cranmer's enemies

* This declaration of Cranmer is printed at full length in Strype's *Cranmer*, vol. i. pp. 437-8.

were numerous and actively engaged in seeking revenge. Again I must repeat that the ill-feeling against Cranmer was chiefly of his own creation. His conduct in the case of Katharine of Arragon, Anna Boleyn, Catharine Howard, and Anne of Cleves, earned for him the fervid detestation of every mother in England. In the reign of Edward he persecuted the Baptists and other sects; but the consignment of Anne Boucher to the flames, overriding the merciful leanings of his young Sovereign, was set down justly as an act of his own cruel will. This last proceeding of a domineering and unscrupulous Churchman utterly wrecked his popularity with all religionists, and every class throughout England. Archbishop Laud was never more execrated by the Puritans of 1641 than Cranmer had been by the Dissenters of his time.

It is probable that the only friend Cranmer possessed at this period was Dr. Gardyner, whom he had treated with such injustice and cruelty in Edward's reign. This may appear strange, but it is nevertheless true. The death of Dr. Gardyner in 1555 had a fatal effect upon Cranmer's existence. With the failure of the unjust and abortive effort to effect a change of dynasty, the Reformers abandoned the Archbishop to his fate; in fact, he seems to have secured no friends, much less constituted a party.*

* The third volume of this work will open with the "Last Days of Archbishop Cranmer."

CHAPTER XXVII.

MARY AND ELIZABETH.

WITH the death of Edward commenced the political career of Elizabeth. Surrounded by perils and troubles, she was noted, even at an early age, for a duplicity to which she must have felt the necessities of her position impelled her. In the words of a French historian, "she was an admirable actress, but without one touch of Nature's kindness or nobility." That she was deceived, and used by many of her own party was certain; that she was implicated with Wyatt, Courtenay, and other traitors, there is also evidence, direct and indirect, sufficient *then* to prove treason against her, and for a tenth part of which directed against herself she would have sent the offender to the block. One of Elizabeth's notable biographers makes the admission that "her sister had every reason to doubt her loyalty."* The Government of Mary intercepted two notes addressed to Elizabeth by Sir Thomas Wyatt. In the first of these documents he tells her to remove at once to Donnington, which was in the vicinity of his head-quarters; in the next

* Miss Strickland's *Queens of England*, vol. v.

note he again "urges her to action." Three despatches of Noailles to the French Government had been intercepted and deciphered, which revealed the plans of the conspirators. Noailles had married one of Elizabeth's maids of honour; which circumstance, of course, afforded a facility for more secure intercourse than otherwise could have publicly taken place between the disaffected heiress of the Crown and the representative of a Foreign Power. In addition to these presumptive evidences, a letter supposed to have been written by Elizabeth to the King of France, had fallen into the hands of Queen Mary. The Duke of Suffolk, doubtless with a view to the preservation of his own daughter, Lady Jane Dudley, declared that the object of the conspiracy was the dethronement of the Queen, and the elevation of Elizabeth to her place. Wyatt acknowledged that he had written more than one letter to Elizabeth, and charged Courtenay, face to face, with having first suggested the rebellion. Sir James Crofts confessed "that he had conferred with Elizabeth, and solicited her to retire to Donnington;" Lord Russell, "that he had privately conveyed letters to her from Wyatt;" and another prisoner, "that he had been privy to a correspondence between Carew and Courtenay respecting the intended marriage of this nobleman and the princess." "In short," says Miss Strickland, "a more disgusting series of treachery and cowardice never was exhibited than on this occasion; and if it be true that there is honesty among dishonest—that is to say, an observance of good faith towards each other in time of peril—it is certain nothing of the kind was to be found among these confederates, who respectively endeavoured, by the denunciation of their associates to shift

the penalty of their mutual offences to their fellows in misfortune.*

Wyatt's first confession was "that the Sienr D'Oysell, when he passed through England into Scotland with the French Ambassador to that country, spoke to Sir James Crofts to persuade him to prevent the marriage of Queen Mary with the heir of Spain; to raise Elizabeth to the throne, marry her to Courtenay, and put the Queen to death." He also confessed that aid was guaranteed by the King of France to the confederates, and that invasions were projected from France and Scotland.† "We have this morning," writes Mr. Secretary Bourne to the Council, "travailed with Sir Thomas Wyatt, touching the Lady Elizabeth and her servant, Sir William Saintlow; and your lordship shall understand that Wyatt affirmeth his former sayings" (a sworn statement he had made), and says further "that Sir James Crofts knoweth more, if he be sent for and examined. Whereupon Crofts has been called before us and examined, and confesseth with Wyatt, charging Saintlow with like matter, and further, as we shall declare unto your said lordships. Wherefore, under your correction, we think necessary, and beseech you to send for Mr. Saintlow, and to examine him, or cause him to be sent hither, by us to be examined. Crofts is plain, and will tell all."

The Spanish Ambassador, in his report to the Emperor Charles, dated March 1st, affirms that Crofts had confessed the truth in a written deposition, and admitted in plain terms the intrigues of the French Ambassador with the

* *Queens of England*, vol. v. (first edit.)

† Burnet, Foxe, Griffet; Kempe's Loseby MSS.; Lingard; Renaud's *Letters to Charles V.*; Mackintosh; Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.

"heretics and rebels." This deposition has been vainly sought for at the State Paper Office.*

Elizabeth evinced no sign of guilt when Gardynier and the Lords of the Council waited on her—it may have been on the part of Gardynier to entrap her—on the part of Mary to seek a reason for the punishment already inflicted; for, although Mary had reason to know her sister's desire to see her overthrown, the worst enemy of the Queen cannot accuse her of ever agreeing to anything harsher than a brief imprisonment, and a menace to change the succession to the Queen of Scots. On this occasion Elizabeth addressed Gardynier and the Council as follows:—

"My lords, I am glad to see you, for methinks I have been kept a great while from you, desolately alone. Wherefore I would entreat you to be a means to the Queen's Majesty that I may be delivered from my imprisonment, in which I have been kept a long time, as to you, my lords, is not unknown.

Gardynier, in reply, told her she must then confess her fault and put herself on the Queen's mercy. She replied, that rather than she would do so, she would lie in prison all her life; that she had never offended against the Queen in thought, word, or deed; that she craved no mercy at her Majesty's hand, but rather desired to put herself on the law."

The next day Gardynier and his colleagues came to her again, and Gardynier told her that the Queen marvelled at her boldness in refusing to confess her offence, so that it might seem as if her Majesty had wrongfully imprisoned her grace. "Nay," replied Elizabeth, "she may, if it please her, punish me as she thinketh good.

"Her Majesty willeth me to tell you," retorted Gardynier, "that you must tell another tale ere that you are set at liberty." Elizabeth replied, "I had as lief lie in prison with honesty, as to

* State Papers of Mary's reign; Tytler's *Edward and Mary*.

be abroad suspected of her Majesty;" adding, "that which I have said I will stand to."

"Then," said Gardyner, "your grace hath the 'vantage of me and these lords, for your long and wrongful imprisonment."

"What 'vantage I have you know," replied Elizabeth; "I seek no 'vantage at your hands, for your so dealing with me—but God forgive you and me also."

They then, finding no concessions were to be obtained from her, withdrew, and Elizabeth was left in confinement for a week, at the end of which time she was startled by receiving a summons to the Queen's presence one night, at ten of the clock.

The contrast between Elizabeth as "a prisoner" and as "a gaoler," in after years, was the most remarkable on record. The cases to which I refer, are those of Catharine Gray, Margaret Douglas, and the Queen of Scots.

It has been stated that Charles V. demanded the immediate execution of Elizabeth. Of this I can find no proof, after much research. Her danger was great, however, but the peril proceeded as much from the indiscretion of her friends, as from the hatred of her enemies. Every one who disliked Queen Mary's measures used her sister's name.* The sequel of the investigations, however, proved the magnanimity of Mary when she pardoned her sister against the consent and protest of her Ministers.†

Mary returned to Courtenay his patrimonial estates, which the forfeiture of his father had vested in the Crown, and restored to him the title of Earl of Devonshire, which had been so long hereditary in his family. But Mary did

* State Papers of Mary's reign; Froude's History of England, vol. vi. p. 94.

† Tytler's Edward and Mary, vol. ii. pp. 311, 312; Queens of England, vol. v.

not restore him from personal love to her prepossessing kinsman. She knew that both herself and he had been persecuted for incidents connected with birth and creed ; yet, it is more than probable, that, but for Gardyners, Courtenay would have long before perished in the Tower, instead of romance making him "the beloved of the two royal sisters," as a French writer contends.

The story of Courtenay's life has been overlaid with romance. Mary no more esteemed him than any other of her courtiers. She restored to him, as above stated, his ancestral property, and one of the first uses he made of his gifts was to attempt to overthrow his benefactress. If he loved Elizabeth, he only manifested his taste for a most alluring princess ; but Elizabeth always protested that she knew not Courtenay as friend or lover, and, although she may have liked his alleged efforts to make her Queen, she did not confide in him. Perhaps her hesitation in giving full countenance to Courtenay's plots was owing to his uncertain character. He was too cowardly to embark in any enterprise of hazard or danger, too incapable for an intricate one, and his weak humour made men afraid to trust themselves to one who, to save himself, might at any moment betray them. Noailles, in writing to his royal master, assures him that, were Courtenay anything but what he was, his success would be certain.

A lively scene occurred between the Queen and Gardyners, when the latter advised her to marry Courtenay. "I had known him in the Tower," says Gardyners, "and I am well inclined towards him." The Queen replied like a Tudor. "My Lord of Winchester, is your having known Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire, in the Tower, a reason why you should

think him a fitting husband for the Queen of this realm? I will not marry that young man; no, never. My Lord, I am a woman to my word; what I say I do."* This short address was spoken in the deep, earnest voice peculiar to the Queen. Gardyner shed tears, and expressed his desire to be obedient to his royal mistress.

The Commons having sent a deputation to the Queen, suggesting a marriage with a subject, which subject was undoubtedly Courtenay, Mary replied with much energy. She assured the Speaker "that she would not marry any man whom she could not love, as it would put her in the grave in three months; she would willingly make any sacrifice for the welfare of her country and her people, but at the same time she believed that Englishmen were possessed of too much generosity and chivalry to ask their Queen to wed a man whom she could not love as a husband." Montague told Petre that a few days before this incident the Queen received Philip's miniature from the Spanish Minister; and Jane Dormer affirms that she saw "Queen Mary kiss it divers times," so that it would appear as if the prudish Mary was in love with Philip ere she saw him. Court gossip would have her Highness as susceptible of the tender passion as her sister Elizabeth. Mary, however, loved from principle and sentiment, whilst the "Golden Eliza" loved the flirtation to which that sentiment gives rise in shifting hearts like her own.

It has been asserted that Courtenay contracted habits of dissipation in the Tower. That he learned many accomplishments amidst many drawbacks, he proved, when he "burst upon the world as the gifted and the beautiful."

* Renaud's Despatches; Tytler's *Edward and Mary*.

But the habits of drunkenness imputed to him were never acquired in the Tower, unless he was exceptionally favoured by the questionable kindness of such gaolers as Sir John Brydges. An iron discipline ruled in that fortress, for the governors were generally chosen for their hearts of steel—"needy men and reckless mostly," as Sprot remarks. Over the Thames for many a long year could have been heard the sounds of mourning and sorrow to rival those which were borne over the lagunes of Venice, and the Lion of England was as dangerous a recipient of accusations as the Lion of St. Mark, though he opened not his literary jaws so widely to the gaze of apprehensive citizens.

When, in Mary's time, Courtenay became free, the Catholic party distrusted him, and ignored his fitness for public life. In fact Mary, or "Mary's interests," to use the term in its modern meaning, liberated Courtenay seemingly in order to enable him to prove the power of ingratitude; he was freed and reinstated; he rebelled and was forgiven, and finally retired, a duplicitous factionist, ungrateful as he was unworthy.

One of the most candid writers on this epoch of our history gives a brief and tolerably impartial account of the real condition of the leading minds of the period. "The truth seems to be," he says, "that the principle of toleration, whether we look to Catholics or Protestants, was utterly unknown. In this respect Gardynier and Knox, Pole and Calvin, Mary and Elizabeth, stand pretty much on the same ground." The same writer has made a fair analysis of the characters of the two royal sisters; and his testimony is the more valuable as he has been really the first writer who had the independence to break down

the idols of historical superstition and fuse them in the crucible of truth, presenting them sternly—gold, alloy, and dross—to circulate amongst posterity. “There are some points in English history,” observes Mr. Tytler, “or rather *in English feeling upon English history*, which have been part of the national belief; they may have been hastily or superficially assumed; they may be proved by as good evidence as the case admits of, to be erroneous; but they are fondly clung to, screwed and dove-tailed into the minds of the people, and to attack them is a historical heresy.” It is with these musings that I approach her who is so generally execrated as the ‘Bloody Mary.’ The idea of exciting a feeling in her favour will appear a chimerical, perhaps a blameable one; yet, having examined the point with some care, let me say for myself that I believe her to have been naturally rather an amiable person. Indeed, till she was thirty-nine years of age, the time of her marriage with Philip, nothing can be said against her, unless we agree to detest her because she remained faithful to the Roman Catholic Church; nor can there, I think, be any doubt that she has been treated by Foxe, Strype, Burnet, Carte, and other Protestant writers, with injustice. The few unpublished letters of hers which I have met with are simple, unaffected, and kind-hearted; bearing in this respect a remarkable contrast to those of Elizabeth, which are often inflated, obscure, and pedantic. The distinguishing epithets by which the two sisters are commonly known, the ‘Bloody Mary,’ and the ‘Good Queen Bess,’ have evidently a reference to their times, yet we constantly employ such epithets individually. My observations apply more to Mary the Princess than to Mary the Queen. After her

marriage with Philip we can trace a gradual change in her feelings and public conduct. Her devoted attachment to her husband, and the cold neglect with which he treated her, could not fail to tell upon a kind and ardent heart. Blighted hope and unrequited affection will change the best of dispositions; and she whose youthful years had undoubtedly given good promise of a future, became disgusted with the world, suspicious, gloomy, and resentful. The subsequent cruelties of her reign were deplorable; yet it is but fair to ascribe much of them rather to her Ministers than to herself. She believed it to be a part of her religion to submit her judgment to the spiritual dictation of Pole, Gardiner, and Bonner, and they burnt men upon principle. This was a miserable mistake; bigotry, in its worst sense.”*

It may be remarked that several writers upon this period affirm that the persecution of Reformers under Mary “did not commence until her Highness had abdicated the office of Head of the Church as her father held it.”† Here is an evidence that, where she acted from her own judgment, there was no persecution; and it so tends to remove much of the obloquy for cruelty attached to her name. When she abdicated her religious supremacy, her Ministry assumed that responsibility, and Mary has consequently suffered in the eyes of that vast portion of posterity which cannot sever the name of a sovereign (especially a woman) from the acts of advisers at once powerful, prejudiced, or revengeful. Foxe acknowledges that “the Queen was a woman *every way excellent while she followed her own*

* Tytler's Edward and Mary, vol. i. pp. 49, 50.

See Heylin; Strype's Memorials; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. vi.

inclination." Fuller, who may be regarded as the most truthful Protestant historian of those days, states that "she had been a worthy Princess if as little had been done *under* her as *by* her." Again, we find Foxe in his Martyrology adducing an instance of Mary's toleration, and even of Gardyners mercy. Few would gainsay Foxe's evidence in favour of either. Mary, in this instance under review, acted on her own prerogative, and her conduct does her credit. Dr. Edwin Sandys had been arrested for two offences which, in Tudor days, were more numerous fatal in proportion to the assumed creed of the monarch. Dr. Edwin Sandys had assailed the Queen's title, insulted her religion, and denounced her mode of worship. Notwithstanding this, however, Mary listened to the petition of one of her ladies on behalf of Sandys, and said "she would act favourably if the Bishop of Winchester (Gardyners) did no objection make." When the Bishop next time entered the council-chamber of the Queen, she said, "Winchester, what think you about Dr. Sandys? Is he not sufficiently punished?" "As it pleases your Majesty," answered Gardyners, who had previously promised that if the Queen were inclined to clemency he would not stand in the way. The Queen said, "Then, truly, we would have him set at liberty." She at once signed the warrant of release, and at her instance, Gardyners also set his name to the document.* In the reign of Elizabeth, as Archbishop of York, Sandys became a remorseless persecutor of Catholics and Dissenters. The Baptists execrated him.

* Foxe's Martyrology, book iii. p. 76.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

WYATT AND THROCKMORTON.

QUEEN MARY's conduct during Wyatt's rebellion proves her to have possessed great courage and energy. Calm and collected amidst the din of warlike preparations, the Queen cheered the timid and impelled the tardy. She rode to the City mounted on a war charger, surrounded by her Privy Councillors, and attended by some ladies of her Court. She did not seek London as a place of security, but entered it to encourage by her presence, and cheer by her words, the loyal citizens who were faithful to her cause. Whilst Wyatt's forces held Southwark, and the rebels threatened an irruption of fifteen thousand men into London, the Queen rode to Guildhall, where, with the sceptre in her hand, she made a spirited speech, concluding in the following words:—"Wherefore, good subjects, pluck up your hearts; like true men, stand fast with your lawful Sovereign against these rebels, and heed them not, for I do not, I assure you. I leave my Lord Howard and my Lord Treasurer (Winchester) to assist my Lord Mayor in the safeguard of the City from spoil and sack, which is the only aim of the rebellious crew."

The Lord Mayor, in a full suit of armour, cried: "God Save Queen Mary and the Prince of Spain!" and the cry was repeated by a myriad of voices. In two days after-

wards the army of Wyatt was beaten and dispersed, or, as has been quaintly said, "melted away like the flesh of the Psalmist." In sad truth, however, great numbers of the misguided men were ruthlessly executed by orders of the very Council, most of whom would have been rebels if revolt had promised success. Notwithstanding the Queen's victory, "treason and treachery lurked in every corner of London." The Anabaptist element was to be found amongst the lower classes, who were quite outspoken as to a "division of land, and the remission of taxes." They had many grievances to complain of, but their wrongs were not likely to be redressed by such men as Courtenay, or Wyatt, who belonged to the class that had plundered the heritage of the poor.

Sir Thomas Wyatt's supporters in Kent were not to be relied upon; they were just as impulsive and violent, yet brave as those whom Jack Cade led to conflict more than a century before; and although very careless Catholics, they hated everything in connection with the Reformers. Wyatt deceived these people, and they deceived themselves as to the chances of a "large booty when they sacked London." The wealthy London merchants dreaded their establishments falling a prey to the Kentish men. Lord Cobham, the uncle of Wyatt, describes his nephew's followers as "rascals and rabble; fellows who lived by spoil."* Cobham secretly pushed Wyatt forward, and wished well to the treason; he also took an oath to promote it; and according to his own subsequent admission, he never intended to have kept his word with the parties whom he betrayed. He next secretly

* Queen Jane and Queen Mary.

corresponded with the Queen and her Council, and hurried on the destruction of his nephew, who, in turn, was quite willing to betray his uncle. Lord Cobham's three sons were engaged in Wyatt's rebellion; they were taken prisoners, found guilty of treason, yet pardoned by the Queen. One of Cobham's sons became a noted pirate in the reign of Elizabeth.

Catholicity and Protestantism were invoked by men who were regardless of all Christian sentiment; interest, retaliation, revenge, and change, were the real motives of the "leading patriots." The State Papers of the period present a sad catalogue of the treachery and deception practised by the rebel party amongst themselves.*

The citizens of London were determined to sustain the Queen at all hazards. On Monday, the 12th of February, a general gaol delivery took place—not by the hand of mercy, but by means of a score of executioners. Dozens of gibbets were erected all over London; and by Thursday human bodies were hanging up at St. Paul's Churchyard, London Bridge, Fleet Street, and Charing Cross.† The Queen's Council acted with ruthless severity.

It was no religious movement, for the most influential Reformers were on the Queen's side. The rebels were impelled by many motives—some for love of booty; others, of the Anabaptist type, who were opposed to all government or control; then, again, the "brave and thoughtless," who so often rush to the standard of revolt. Of such conflicting material Wyatt's army was composed. A religious sentiment formed the smallest element in its ranks.

* MSS. State Paper Office.

† Stowe's Chronicle; Queen Jane and Queen Mary; Renaud's Despatches.

If Rosso can be considered a reliable authority, Sir Thomas Wyatt assured the Duke of Norfolk that "he and his followers were in arms *not* against the Queen's Highness but the tyranny of the Spaniards." It is difficult, however, to ascertain what "tyranny" the Spaniards did, or could, exercise in England at that period (1554). Yet, although the country had almost become the slave of the governing party, even its domestic factions were actuated by a feeling of national pride that would not yield to any foreign influence, from Spain or any other country. On this point there was a cordial agreement of sentiment between spirits even antagonistic as those of Gardyner and Cranmer. As to the general merits of Sir Thomas Wyatt, he is better known in the tales of fancy than respected in the pages of history. He was ill-tempered, impetuous, and, when he considered his self-assumed position not acknowledged, he "chafed like a charger unbroken." Lord Pembroke, who knew him well, gave him all the acknowledgment in his power when he said that Sir Thomas Wyatt was "faithful to his Sovereign when she suited him." He had been well treated by Queen Mary; but he hoped for more distinction from Elizabeth. His loyalty was measured by an absorbing self-love, with which chivalry, or even courage and manly honour, could not co-exist.

Several historians labour under the impression that Wyatt's confessions were extorted by torture on the rack, but there is no document extant to prove the use of the rack in his case; neither in his speeches on the trial, carefully noted down at the time, does he allude to such a fact. If he had been tortured, he would undoubtedly have told the public so when addressing them from the scaffold. In

allusion to the services of his family to the House of Tudor he said :—" My grandfather served most truly the Queen's grandfather (Henry VII.), and for his sake was on the rack in the Tower.*

It is stated that Courtenay visited Wyatt the night before his death. " They met in the dungeon. Wyatt begged Courtenay's pardon on bended knees for accusing him in the wrong." Lord Chandos denies that such a scene took place. The evidence of Chandos is not worthy of much consideration. It argues much in the Queen's favour at this juncture, that she would not proceed against her sister and Courtenay, because the proof of their treason was contained in cipher letters, easy to be forged. The cipher correspondence in the case of Elizabeth consisted of two letters from Wyatt to the Princess, and one more important still, from her Highness to the King of France.†

Let the reader remember that, in Elizabeth's reign, correspondence in cipher brought Mary Queen of Scots to the block, protesting, as she did, that the letter, or letters, were *forged*. Sir Harris Nicolas has long since proved that the cipher in the case of the Queen of Scots was *forged*. The forgery in question is *now* again proved to have been executed with the full knowledge of Burleigh and Walsingham; and it is very possible that the Queen was also a party to it. Killegrew, Burleigh's nephew, was also concerned in this murderous plot. The cipher forgery in the case of the unfortunate prisoner of Fotheringay

* Holinshed (black letter), vol. ii. p. 1736.

† Lingard, vol. vii.; Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.; *State Papers of Mary's reign*.

Castle is one of the most deliberate, cold-blooded acts of assassination on record in those days.

The death scene of Sir Thomas Wyatt was the best phase of his life, for he did justice to Elizabeth and to himself. He sought, it is said, to criminate the Princess the night before his execution, in the hope of a pardon ; on the scaffold he retracted what he is said to have so lately confessed ; and "most solemnly declared that the Princess Elizabeth was innocent of all participation in his treason." He expressed "a wish to die in peace with all people, and begged the prayers of the spectators for his *soul's health beyond the grave.*" In conclusion he observed :—"Good people, take warning of my fate, and be loyal to the Queen's Highness. I hope I will be the last person who may come here to die the death of a rebel. And now, good people, I bid you all a long farewell."

Sir Thomas Wyatt was only twenty-three years of age, presenting a handsome person, gracious and insinuating manners, but possessed of little candour or sincerity towards those who sacrificed themselves to promote his ambition. Jacob Rasper, the "Hot-Gospel man," "believed that Wyatt had no real religion ; but if any, he had a dash of that Popery which his mother (Elizabeth Brooks) learnt from the nuns of Shaftesbury and Godstow." Wyatt's mother was most amiable and lovable as a wife.

As usual, some discussion has been raised as to the religious principles of the men who were the political agents of the Reformers. Camden states that Wyatt was *not* a Catholic, and Maister Foxe believes him to have been "a friend to the Reformers." John Stowe, who may be almost regarded as an eye-witness of those events,

contends that Wyatt was privately supported by such men as Bishop Poynt. Burnet denies this statement; and Pomeroy affirms that Poynt acted with cruel deception to the unfortunate young man whom the "Hot-Gospel men" betrayed.

Sharon Turner claims Wyatt as a staunch Protestant—a difficult question to decide at this distance of time: Rapin states in a very positive manner that he was a "*Roman Catholic*;" it is necessary to add Burnet affirms the same. Miss Aikin considers Wyatt as a Catholic. Wyatt was all along opposed to Lady Jane Dudley's party; yet he was supported by a Protestant "discontented section."* Whilst a partisan of Elizabeth, Wyatt was a professing member of the olden creed; the same may be said of Elizabeth herself. It is related by Pomeroy that the night before his death Sir Thomas Wyatt was visited by a confessor, at the desire of his family; that "he cried and sobbed and returned to Popery again, and called upon the Virgin Mother to intercede for his sinful *sowle*." The ladies by whom Wyatt was fostered from childhood were rigid Catholics—relatives and friends of his exemplary mother. The domestic history of young Wyatt confirms the statement of Harry Pomeroy—himself an honest and worthy Reformer. The fact was, that Thomas Wyatt was a Catholic in belief, but like the "respectable sections" of the laity, at that period, he practised no religion at all, and led a very careless life. Like many other families of those times, Wyatt had substantial "worldly motives" for politically sustaining the Reformation. His father received

* Aikin's *Court of Elizabeth*, vol. i. pp. 136 and 137.

the revenues of an hospital and two convents from Henry VIII.; yet he died in the faith of his fathers.

As the reader is aware, Sir Thomas Wyatt was the son of the poet and Court wit, and, as reported, the secret lover of Anna Boleyn. The gossip of the times presented the aspiring rebel as a lover of the "Golden Eliza;" but it happened that, at this very period, Wyatt had an interesting young wife and a son, for whom, Farlow alleges, he "cared little." So the romantic part of his story not only loses its interest, but adds to the worthlessness of his character.

Sir Thomas Wyatt seemed at first an ardent adherent of Queen Mary, and proclaimed her as his Sovereign in Maidstone and other towns, for which he received the thanks of the Queen. Some strange statements have been handed down to us to account for Wyatt's defection from the Royal standard. It is stated that "he had been employed during several years of his life in embassies to Spain; and the intimate acquaintance which he had thus acquired of the principles and practices of its Court, filled him with such horror of their introduction into his native country, that preferring patriotism to loyalty, where their claims appeared incompatible, he incited his neighbours and friends to insurrection." These allegations, although put forward by such writers as Miss Aiken, have no foundation in fact. As already stated, at the time of Wyatt's death he was only twenty-three years of age, and if attached to the English embassy in Spain for "some years previous," he must have been but a boy whilst studying diplomacy, and consequently not very competent to detect corruption in the "best arranged Court in Europe." As to Wyatt's

patriotism, it was a virtue which he assumed. He was a man of no principle; and like his brilliant father made religion and honour the servants of his *interest*. The father had some redeeming qualities—the son had none whatever.

William Thomas, who had been clerk of the Privy Council in Edward's reign, was the last executed for participation in Wyatt's rebellion. Thomas had been most urgent with the rebels to destroy Queen Mary, if she fell into their hands.* Thomas was a Calvinist.

A few days subsequent to the execution of Wyatt Sir Nicholas Throckmorton was brought to trial. This gentleman who had given the Queen that important warning which had saved her life and Crown, became a malcontent, and, to a certain extent, intrigued by message and letter with Sir Thomas Wyatt. His trial was the first instance, since the accession of the Tudor line, in which a jury dared to do their duty honestly and acquit a prisoner arraigned by the Crown. The prisoner defended himself manfully. He would not be browbeaten by his partial judge (Bromley), who had been so long accustomed to administer law as the Crown desired, that he would fain conduct the trial in the old fashion which had destroyed so many in the days of Henry VIII., when condemnation followed arraignment with unerring fatality. Throckmorton had an answer for every question. He appealed to the recently restored laws of England. He quoted the Queen's own eloquent charge to her judges,† when "she inducted them into office, the memory of which would have

* State Papers of Mary's reign; Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.

† Holinshed, b. iv., 4to ed., vol. ii. p. 1747.

been lost but for the courageous reclamations of Throckmorton. "What time," he said, "my Lord Chief Justice, it pleased the Queen's Majesty to call you to this honourable office I did learn of a great man of her Highness's Privy Council that, among other good instructions, her Majesty charged and enjoined you 'to administer law and justice indifferently, without respect to persons.' And notwithstanding the old error among you, which did not admit any witness to speak, or any other matter to be heard, in favour of the prisoner, when the Crown was party against him, the Queen told you 'her pleasure was that whatsoever could be brought in favour of the accused should be admitted to be heard;' and moreover, that you, specially, and likewise all other justices, should not 'sit in judgment otherwise for her Highness than for her subject.' This manner of indifferent proceeding being enjoined by the commandment of God, and likewise being commanded you by the Queen's own mouth; therefore reject nothing that can be spoken in my defence, and in so doing you shall show yourselves worthy ministers, and fit for so worthy a mistress."

"You mistake the matter," replied Judge Bromley; "the Queen spake those words to Maister Morgan, Chief Justice of the Common Pleas."

This ordinance of Mary to her judges was no political device at her accession: she honestly acted upon it; for the witness whose testimony acquitted Throckmorton that day came out of her own household. At the moment when the prisoner's life hung on the proof of whether he was conscious or not of the precise time of Wyatt's rising, he called on Sir Francis Inglefield, who, with his colleague,

Sir Edward Walgrave, was sitting on the bench with the judges, and asked him to speak what he knew on that head. Inglefield immediately bore witness, like an honest man as he was :—

“It is truth,” said he, “that you were at my house, in company with your brothers, at that time, and to my knowledge ignorant of the whole matter.”

The moment Throckmorton was acquitted, the judge *committed* to prison the honest jury who had done their duty like true citizens with a virtue then unknown. This jury deserve lasting praise as the practical restorers of the constitution of their country, long overthrown by the abuses which the Queen had pointed out to her judges. The facts developed in this remarkable trial indicate that the wishes and will of the Queen were distinct from the officials who composed her Government,* and by whom her reputation has, in greatest measure, been maligned and injured. The men whom the necessities of Mary and her woman's unfitness for the stern requirements of State compelled to retain around her had been drilled in the despotic ways of Henry VIII. England had been, subsequent to the sickness and infirmity of Henry VIII., governed by a small dishonest junta, composed for the occasion, of the most active spirits in the Privy Council. The members of this clique oppressed the people, defied the laws, threatened or corrupted the judges, and controlled the Crown, till, the cup of their iniquities becoming full in the next century, they caused the subversion of the

* Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.; *Queens of England*, vol. v. (first edit.).

monarchy. To gain a place amongst this evil group was the aim and end of every unprincipled man of abilities in public life, without the slightest scruple whether he professed the Protestant or Catholic creed.* This unconstitutional power had essentially strengthened itself during the minority of Edward VI., and was by no means inclined to give ground before a Queen-regnant of disputed title.

It was the trial of Sir Nicholas Throckmorton which first brought the arbitrary proceedings of the Privy Council into popular notice under the designation of the decrees of the Star Chamber, afterwards so infamous in English history. This cruel and unprincipled caucus had long been at work in the same way, but in the present instance public attention was peculiarly excited by Throckmorton's recitation of the Queen's charge to her judges, and indignation was raised to a high pitch when the jury were, after unjust imprisonment, threatened by the Star Chamber, and mulcted by heavy fines, while the acquitted prisoner was still detained in the Tower. As the Queen, at the intercession of his brother, set Sir Nicholas Throckmorton free soon after, uninjured in person or estate, he justly considered he had had a fortunate escape. Mary finally remitted the fines of the fearlessly honest jury who had acquitted him. "But," writes Miss Strickland, "it was alike degrading to a Queen who wished to rule constitutionally, and to Englishmen, whom the law had not declared guilty, to give and receive pardons of this kind." "There

* Several of Mary and Elizabeth's Privy Councillors had twice professed Catholic and twice professed Protestant principles; and some changed their "religion" four or five times.

is little doubt," observes Lingard, "that Throckmorton was deeply implicated in the conspiracy; but he claimed the benefit of the recent statute abolishing all treasons created since the reign of Edward III.*

It is worthy of note that, in three days subsequent to Queen Mary's death, Elizabeth took Throckmorton into her service, and when she was only two days Queen she sent him upon a dishonest and discreditable mission.† As Elizabeth's Ambassador in Paris, Throckmorton appears as a spy upon the Queen of Scots, then a few months a widow, engaged in intrigue with the traitor, Lord James Stuart, the illegitimate brother of Mary. In one of Throckmorton's despatches from Paris to Elizabeth, he speaks in glowing terms of Lord James Stuart's "honesty, honour, and piety," and then assures his Royal Mistress that the said James Stuart has revealed to him all the secrets of the Queen of Scots, which he had sworn never to divulge to any person. Throckmorton continues: "The Queen of Scots has *great confidence in her brother; she does not suspect that he has told me all; his visit to me was private.* There are two other gentlemen with Lord Stuart who will also render your Highness good service."‡ The "gentlemen" in question were the mercenary Scotch traitors, Clark and Wood. At this early stage of Throckmorton's diplomatic career, under Elizabeth, he adopted the Puritan fashion of ending his letters with some prayer, like Cecil or Robert Dudley. It is a curious incident

* Tytler's *Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.; *State Papers of Mary's reign*.

† Lingard, vol. v. p. 432.

‡ Throckmorton's *Secret Despatches to Cecil and Queen Elizabeth*. The original, in French, is still extant.

in his life, that Throckmorton's first introduction to Court circles was as a page to the noted Harry Fitzroy, Duke of Richmond, to whose career I have alluded in the chapter entitled "Men of the Time."* The page and his young master frequently quarrelled; the latter inflicting blows upon his accommodating servant. The sudden death of Fitzroy released Throckmorton from the service of his spoiled and petulant young master. His subsequent life was a continued struggle amidst contradictory events—a contest in which conscience seemed to have finally vanquished selfishness.

A few words more here as to Wyatt. According to a State Paper of Mary's reign, Bishop Gardiner styled Sir Thomas Wyatt as "that young bastard with little substance." Whether Gardiner had spoken in this undignified manner of the son of his former friend it is impossible to decide. But beyond doubt the young and beautiful mother of the ill-fated Thomas Wyatt was a wife without spot or stain upon her character. Anna Boleyn has left on record a memorial to her virtue, and the holiness of her life. Young Wyatt had no recollection of either of his parents. He was neglected and forgotten from childhood upwards, and appeared for years, as if "moving in a cloud."

* In the third volume of this work I shall return to the romantic marriage and mysterious death of Fitzroy.

CHAPTER XXIX.

LADY JANE DUDLEY.

IN those days startling events followed in quick succession without their fatal consequences being considered, until fanaticism, anarchy, and bloodshed had taken the place of religion, law, and order. About two months before the death of King Edward the Duke of Northumberland contrived to gain the assent of the dying monarch to a marriage between his own son, Guildford Dudley, and Lady Jane Gray, daughter of the Marquis of Dorset, and grand-niece of Henry VIII. The marriage took place at that historic mansion long known in the Strand as Durham House. Knowing the daring character of the "self-created" Duke, the people of London looked upon this marriage with some suspicion; but the splendour of the wedding, and the profuse entertainments given to all classes, for a time turned popular attention to other topics, and the Dudley scheme was apparently complete.

Those who had hearkened to all the gossip circulated in London concerning the marriage of Lady Jane Gray to Lord Guildford Dudley little imagined what might be the results to the nation of that union. The dress and bearing of Jane Gray as a bride, was discussed in every circle of "Old London Town." Shall I be permitted to add that posterity may be just as inquisitive as their merrie-making

and hospitable grand-sires. As the beautiful Jane was a staunch Protestant and an "established martyr," there is doubtless some interest felt amongst the "curious and the pious" of the present day, as to her wedding costume. So I introduce to the reader Jane Gray and her bridal party on the morning of her ill-fated marriage:—

"Lady Jane's head-dress was of green velvet, set around with precious stones. She wore a gown of cloth of gold, and a mantle of silver tissue. Her hair hung down her back combed and plaited in a curious fashion 'then unknown to ladies of qualitie.' This arrangement of the hair was said to have been devised by the beautiful Elizabeth Tynney. The bride was led to the altar by two handsome pages, with bride-laces and rosemary tied to their sleeves. Sixteen virgins, dressed in 'pure white,' walked before the bride. Northumberland and his family were remarkable on this occasion for the splendour of their costumes. A profusion of flowers were scattered along the bridal route: the church bells gave a greeting, and the poor received beef, bread, and ale for three days."

Roger Ascham relates that the wedding was much in the old Popish fashion; and he believed that Northumberland, with all his apparent zeal for the Reformation, was a Papist in his heart. The sequel proved the truth of astute Roger's strictures.

This marriage over, Northumberland had another daring step to take—namely, to change the succession to the Crown. The increasing illness of the King hurried matters to a crisis. The sort of education which Edward had received taught him to look upon the interests of the Reformers as of far greater importance than the legitimate claims of his sisters—Mary and Elizabeth. Northumberland pleaded for Jane Dudley on the ground of her "sound Protestantism." It did not take much persuasion to

induce Edward to aid in the illegal transfer of the Crown. So the false Minister triumphed.

The reader has seen in the preceding chapters the course adopted by Northumberland and the Council, and the disasters which followed.

Lady Jane Dudley, historically known as Jane Gray, and who has been the object of such deep sympathy with posterity, was not the victim of "Popish hatred," as frequently alleged, but of her own ambitious family, and of those dishonest politicians who patronized the existence of the "new learning," and boldly proclaimed treason to their lawful Sovereign as a virtue. The Reformers as to "belief" were not numerous, but the guidance of such a potent and ruthless accomplice as Lord Pembroke could hardly fail to prove fatal, even to a rightful cause. Pembroke had been the first to offer homage to Queen Jane, and a few days subsequently he proclaimed Queen Mary. He was bold, reckless, daring, avaricious, and surrounded by armed followers who were true to whatever cause he espoused.

When all was over, Lady Jane could have escaped from the Tower, but she had so much reliance upon the integrity as well as the power of her supporters, that she feared no peril. Of course, she was soon sadly undeceived. If Queen Mary had been as free from fear as Lady Jane, and had followed her own expressed will, instead of being swayed by the "pressing suggestions" of Lords Winchester and Pembroke, her bitterest enemies must have given her credit for some magnanimity. In monarchs there may be no greater crime than moral cowardice. Yet it may be urged that the apprehensions of Mary in the case of Lady Jane Dudley were not so fatal to that lady as the belief in-

stilled by the Queen's advisers that *justice* demanded the sacrifice. Again, why did Jane's "friends" rebel whilst she lay under sentence of death, and in the power of the Queen whom those partisans endeavoured to destroy?

A few hours after Wyatt's defeat, as Queen Mary was passing through Temple Bar, and shudderingly witnessed the ghastly results of the revolt, Lords Pembroke, Winchester, Arundel, and Paget stopped her, and, pointing out to her the slaughter and desolation already caused by treason, solemnly assured her that such scenes would be frequent if she longer permitted her rival for the throne to live. Shocked by the bloodshed and ruin around her, and impelled by the earnest urgings of these men, the Queen signed the death-warrant of Lady Jane, whom it is plain that Mary did not intend to execute, seeing that the sentence of death had been pronounced three months previously,* and the warrant was not put in force till the 12th of February.

In Dr. Nares' voluminous life of Lord Burleigh (vol. i. pp. 542-3) a strange scene is represented as having occurred at Lord Pembroke's house, when Paget, Arundel and others, were debating as to whether Lady Jane Dudley was to be sustained or abandoned. Nares goes into the history of Lady Jane at some length, but throws no new light upon the matter. He joins in the lament over the fallen lady; yet seems unwilling to admit that she was

* Jane Dudley, her husband, and Archbishop Cranmer, were arraigned together for high treason, at a Special Commission, held in Guildhall on the 3rd of November, 1553, before Chief Justice Morgan. The prisoners all pleaded guilty, and, having received sentence of death, returned, as they came, from the Tower, on foot.

treacherously treated by the leading Reformers. As I have remarked in the course of this historical inquiry, there is nothing so clearly proved as the fact that false hopes were held out to Lady Jane. Indeed there was something unprecedented in the villany of her sworn supporters. She was basely betrayed, and more basely deserted, by the very men who induced her to accept the Crown. It is certain that some of the English nobles who professed to be opposed to the Reformation party, entered into the plot to support Lady Jane Dudley, and subsequently deserted her. Lord Arundel was foremost amongst these men, and he actually sat in judgment upon some of the rebels with whom he had himself conspired against Queen Mary. The Catholic party were as corrupt and time-serving as the Reformers; and whenever the opportunity occurred, the Catholic lords and squires partook of the Church plunder without scruple. The Reformers, however, claimed the "right" of seizing upon the heritage of the poor wherever or by whatever means it could be procured. The only competition amongst the heads of the two factions seemed to be who could secure most for their avid cravings.

Bishop Poynt, who was personally acquainted with the political intrigues of the chief Reformers of Edward and Mary's time, states that "the very men who were the sworn chiefs of the Council which proclaimed Lady Jane Gray and caused Queen Mary to be pronounced as a bastard through all England and Ireland, and who were the severest forcers of men—yea, under the threatened fear of treason, to swear and subscribe unto their doings—*afterwards became councillors*, I will not say procurers

of the innocent Lady Jane's death—are at the present time (Mary's reign) in the highest offices and places in the Commonwealth." "The persons here alluded to," says Strype, "were the Lords Winchester, Pembroke, and Arundel." Turner, whose sympathies are all with the House of Tudor, makes no allowance for the position of the unhappy victim of her father, her cruel mother, and mother-in-law, and her daring father-in-law. "Jane Gray had descended," says Turner, "from her social probity to take a royalty which was another's inheritance, and although importunity had extorted her acquiescence, yet her first reluctance gave testimony, even to herself, that she had not erred in ignorance of what was right, and no one but herself could know how much the temptation of the offered splendour had operated beyond the solicitation to seduce her to what she ought to have continued to refuse."* Turner contends that there is no evidence to prove any perfidy against that part of the Council who composed the Government of Edward VI., amongst whom the notables reviewed in this work were some of the principal actors. Frazer Tytler observes, that this "extraordinary opinion of Sharon Turner is contradicted by almost every step the Council took; by their own letters; by Cecil's submission; by the narrative of Stowe and Holinshed, and by the express declaration of those men to Mary, *that all along they had remained her true subjects.*"†

Miss Aikin, with the indignant feelings of an impartial

* Sharon Turner's History of England, vol. xi.

† Tytler's Edward and Mary, vol. ii.

commentator, censures the chief actors in the plot to raise Jane Dudley to a throne, and abandoning her on its failure. "The selfish meanness and political profligacy of such conduct," writes Miss Aikin, "it is needless to stigmatize; but this was not the age of public virtue in England."*

Fuller remarks that Jane Gray had the "innocence of childhood, the beauty of youth, the solidity of the middle, the gravity of old age, and all at sixteen; the birth of a princess, the learning of a clerk, the life of a saint, yet the death of a malefactor for her parents' offences." Bailey observes that "she accepted the Crown rather as a burthen than as a favour, and resigned it with as great indifference as she would have laid down a garland when its beauties were faded, and its scent had gone." In Miss Strickland's "*Princesses of Tudor*," she says, "Jane Dudley is without exception the most noble character of the royal Tudor lineage."

The above compliments to Lady Jane, when taken with the remaining text of the writings in which they appear, seem not to be the independent eulogy of conscientious admiration, for they are accompanied with the expressions of sentiments the most uncharitable towards others. The Goddess of Spring, however, rarely justifies the hopes of her admirers; and thus, if the "philosophic girl and saint of sixteen" were entrusted with regal power during the interval, she might at five and twenty prove a very different personage. Such a speculation is not without arguments derived from other instances of precocious excellence, and "loving mind," and the mention of such a contingency

* Miss Aikin's *Court of Elizabeth*, vol. i. p. 128.

is fairly justified by the sectarian eulogy of Foxe and his imitators.

Most writers represent Lady Jane Dudley as having always been a Protestant or Reformer, but this is not true as regards her early youth. Her father was a Catholic, if anything; and her mother professed the same faith. Their daughter received her first communion as a Catholic, and she remained so until a visit to Catharine Parr enabled that zealous advocate of the Reformation to use the influence of her station and experience to induce young Jane to adopt the new doctrines. We know that Henry VIII. by no means approved of his wife's new tendencies, and a serious quarrel occurred between them concerning the change in Jane's opinions. As to Lady Jane's father, the Marquis of Dorset, he only cared for his child being of that religion or that party which would best suit his own interests, and was ready to exchange his daughter or anything else, for his own selfish purposes. His correspondence with Thomas Seymour shows that he was ready to dispose of his daughter for a sum of money to that established profligate.

In the early part of Elizabeth's reign, Count de Feria, the Spanish ambassador, writes to King Philip, describing Catharine Gray, sister of the deceased Jane, as the "hope of the Catholic and Legitimate party," and continues:—

"I had forgotten to tell your Majesty that Lady Catharine Gray is a good friend of mine, and talks to me in confidence. The Queen, she says, does not like to think of her as her possible successor. The late Queen (Mary) took her into the Privy Chamber, and was kind to her . . . I keep on good terms with

Lady Catharine Gray. She promises me, for her part, not to change her religion, nor to marry without my consent."*

Roger Ascham, John Aylmer, and other Reformers, corresponded with Jane Gray when she was only fifteen years of age. The letters of those men are undeserving of the reputation generally accorded them, and contained what Sir Harris Nicolas styled "most injudicious flattery." Neither Ascham nor Aylmer could be chosen by a conscientious father or guardian to instruct youth, still less a gifted maiden. Neither were noted for morality, and both were known to be hypocrites as to religion.† A few words as to Doctor Aylmer, who, subsequently became a man of mark. Reformers of his stamp received rapid promotion under the government of Elizabeth. From the Archdeaconry of Lincoln Aylmer was elevated to the See of London, for a reply which he published to John Knox's "First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstrous Regiment (government) of Women." This pamphlet is described as an "able defence of queenly monarchs, but at the same time filled with gross flattery of Elizabeth." Sir Harris Nicolas presents Aylmer as "a spiritual tyrant and Court sycophant." The Queen really despised this man, for he was one of the meanest of her spies upon the clergy. Here is a specimen of the style in which he addresses the well-known royal favourite, Christopher Hatton: —

* De Feria's Correspondence, from the Simancas MSS. De Quadra, Bishop of Aquila, was the successor of De Feria. He was an eminent diplomatist, and won the confidence of Elizabeth—if such were possible. His description of Elizabeth, and her extraordinary conversations with him, throw a flood of light on her real character, and are highly interesting. In the third volume of this work I shall return to the remarkable scenes which occurred between Elizabeth and De Quadra.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vi.

"My continual setting forth of her Majesty's infinite gift from God and unspeakable deserts towards us, have merited nothing; yet it is the honour of a prince to *breathe life into dead bodies*, and, after the cold and dead winter, to cheer the dry earth with the fresh and lively spring time. I study with my eyes on my book, and my eyes are also in the Court; *I preach without spirit, I trust not of God*, but of my sovereign, *which is God's lieutenant*; and so *another God unto me*, for of such it is said *vos estis dii*; I eat without stomach, I sleep without rest; I company without comfort and live as one dead."*

To return to Lady Jane's sad history. Roger Ascham, in his "Schoolmaster," gives the circumstances of an interview with Lady Jane at the seat of her father, the Marquis of Dorset, in Leicestershire. Sad and lonely, but not the more sad for being alone, he found the young lady reading Plato in the original tongue. Having asked her how it was possible at her early age that she could have attained such perfection both in philosophy and Greek, Lady Jane replied:—

"Good Maister Roger, I will tell you and tell you a truth which perchance you will marvel to hear. One of the greatest benefits that ever God gave me is, that He sent me so sharp and severe parents and so gentle a schoolmaster. For when I am in presence of either father or mother, whether I speak, keep silence, sit, stand, or go, eat, drink, be merry or sad; be sewing, playing, dancing, or doing anything else, I must do it as it were, in such weight, measure and number, even so perfectly as God made the world, or else I am so *sharply taunted, so cruelly threatened—yea, presently, sometimes with pinches, nips and bobs*, and other ways which I will not name for the honour I bear them—so without measure tormented, that I think myself in hell till time come

* Hatton's Letter Bag, calendared by Sir H. Nicolas, pp. 58, 59.

that I must go to Maister Elmer, who teacheth me so gently, so pleasantly, with such fair allurements to learning, that I think all the time nothing that I am with him. And when I am called from him I fall on a weeping, because whatsoever else I do but learning is full of grief, trouble, fear, and whole misliking unto me. And this my book hath been so much my pleasure, and bringeth daily to me more pleasure and more rest, that in respect of it all other pleasures, in very deed, be but trifles and troubles unto me.”*

The researches of Sir Harris Nicolas have led that acute and learned observer to assure us that there is no ground for most of the marvellous stories which have been narrated of Lady Jane Dudley. He also questions her learning, and doubts her extensive knowledge of Greek.

A sad lot was that of this short-lived, hapless lady. It is questionable, however, if the fate compassed for her by the ambitious plot of her father-in-law was harder than that which awaited her had she lived into the reign of Elizabeth. Lady Jane's sisters, Catharine and Mary, guiltless of any political offence, and only sinning by a lawful and virtuous love, suffered a life-long agony at the hands of Elizabeth. The life of Lady Jane would doubtless have been a “living death,” for, however involuntary, her birth was a political crime which Elizabeth's nature could not pardon.

A few days subsequent to the execution of Northumberland, Gates, and Palmer, Lady Jane held a conversation

* Most probably the allegations as to the severity exercised upon Lady Jane by her mother, are greatly exaggerated. The statements of Roger Ascham, and of Aylmer, to the same purport, are to be received with ample reservation, for truth had small weight with either, when party or prejudice swayed their pens. Jane's mother, in early life, had the reputation of being “an amiable woman, a good wife, and a loving mother.” Human nature, however, seemed capable of undergoing a marvellous revolution in those days.

with "a Citizen of London," in the apartments of the Governor of the Tower. This scene is characteristic of Lady Jane.

"I pray you," asked Lady Dudley, "have they Mass in London again?"

"Yes, in some places."

"It may be so," sighed Jane; "it is not so strange as the sudden conversion of the late Duke. For who would have thought he would have done so?"

"Perchance, he thereby hoped to have had his pardon."

"Pardon!" exclaimed Jane. "Woe be unto him! he hath brought me and our whole stock to a miserable calamity by his ambition. Hoped for life by his turning! though some men be of that opinion, I am not. What man is there living, I pray you, that would hope for life in that case?"

In this dialogue Lady Jane looked upon her father-in-law as the most guilty of all the conspirators. "She continued to speak with great energy," observes the narrator.

"Like as his life was wicked so was his end. I pray God that neither I, nor any friend of mine, die so. *Should I, who am so young, and in my teens, forsake my faith for the love of life? Nay, God forbid.* Much more he (Northumberland) should not, whose fatal course, though he had lived his years, could not have long continued. But life is sweet. . . . God be merciful to us! He sayeth, 'Whoso denieth Him before men, He will not know him in His Father's Kingdom.'"

All present were struck with the courageous manner in which Jane behaved during this short discussion. "Yet,"

writes Elizabeth Tylney, "her way of speaking was gentle but firm; full of kindly feeling towards her enemies. She did not know hate or malice."

From every source I learn that Jane Dudley was extremely amiable. When she retired from her books or her flower-garden she delighted in the society of children; was devoted in friendship to a few lady friends. Her benevolence and charity were on a large scale, and without a shade of ostentation. She inherited some of the peculiarities of Elizabeth Woodyeville, her great-grandmother, the "Queen of many sorrows."

When Abbot Feckenham procured a further respite of three days for Lady Jane, she thanked him for his kindness and humanity, but she was prepared to receive patiently her death in any manner it should please the Queen to appoint. The "discourse on religion which took place between Lady Jane and the Abbot has been misrepresented in almost every phase. One writer states that Feckenham declared he was so ignorant of the questions at issue that she was put to instruct him." In the accounts published by Foxe and Speed the Abbot is completely confounded by the girl theologian of sixteen; in fact, he appears to be ignorant of history, of Scripture, and of theology; a shallow man destitute of eloquence or of powers of reasoning. If the report of Maister Foxe be correct, then Jane Dudley did not study Protestant principles as propounded by Cranmer. Besides, the girl is made far too clever and the picture much overdrawn.

In a work published in 1615, entitled the "Life, Death, and Actions of the Most Chaste, Learned, and Religious Ladye Jane Gray," the writer assures his readers that

"Feckenham found himself *so inferior in holy gifts and learning that he acknowledged himself fitter to be Lady Jane's disciple than her teacher.*" Sir Harris Nicolas gives no credit to this ludicrous brochure. The Puritan writers of 1615 were fervidly imitating John Foxe's style of "manufacturing history," but neither the copy of it, nor the original, for a moment deceived students of history like Anthony Wood and Henry Wharton.

Those who may take the trouble of searching into the history of this "amiable Abbot," as Mr. Froude describes Feckenham—and as some Puritan writers acknowledge—will find that he was a ripe scholar and an able theologian. The most touching account of the noble and delicate nature of Jane Dudley is that recorded by Feckenham himself. "I am," said she, "ready to receive death patiently, and in whatever manner it may please the Queen to appoint. True, my flesh shudders, as is natural to frail humanity, at what I have to undergo; *but I fervently hope that my spirit will spring rejoicingly into the presence of the Eternal God, who will receive it.*"* Elizabeth Tylney corroborates this scene between Lady Jane and the Abbot. "She was standing near, and could not describe her own feelings. Abbot Feckenham was much moved; his manner was all kindliness. He was good by nature as all those who differed from him would have it to be known. He was a true Christian."†

Lady Jane wrote a note to her father a few days before her execution, full of sympathy, and urging him

* Godwin's History of Queen Mary; Queens of England, vol. iii.

† Letters of Elizabeth Tylney to the Duchess of Suffolk and Catharine Gray.

"never to abandon the principles of the Reformation." She spoke indignantly of the Dudley family, who had all returned to Popery again ; *she would not do so to gain the Crown of the Universe, and would be true to God's Word to the death.*" When Jane wrote in this strain to her father, she was not aware that he had been again arrested for high treason, and speedily condemned to death.

Lady Jane's "prophetic exhortation," as it was styled by Archbishop Parker, was written to her sister Catharine Gray the night before her execution. It was "neatly arranged" on some blank leaves at the end of Jane's Greek Testament. It is a remarkable document coming from a girl of sixteen, at such a moment, and under such awful circumstances.* It was a most affecting adieu, breathing as delicate sentiments, and as pious wishes as one sister could express for another. Another sad instance of ingenuous virtue used for the purposes of tortuous guilt.

Lady Jane Dudley was tall and graceful, of fair complexion, with a countenance "full of sweet sadness." The portraits by Holbein represent her brown hair as simply parted over a broad intellectual forehead, surmounted by a coif of velvet, ornamented with jewels, and in shape very like modern bonnets *à la fez*. The sleeves of the dress, we are informed, were light and plain, except for the "epaulette or trimming on the shoulder." The bodice, it is added, "is cut square at the bosom, and the rather long waist is finished by a girdle and tassels falling over a full and flowing skirt. Her hands are small and beautifully formed."

"The picture of Lady Jane," writes Pomeroy, "has

* Harleian MS. ; Sir Harris Nicolas ; *Christian Remembrancer*, 1823 ; Knare's *Life of Lord Burleigh*, vol. i.

excited the pity and admiration of many Italian painters." In Sir Harris Nicolas' "Literary Remains" of Lady Jane Dudley, is to be seen a correct portrait of Jane, taken from Holbein's beautiful picture. According to the engraving from this picture the face of Jane is representative of thought and sadness—the contour more resembling that of a woman of twenty-five than of a girl of sixteen. Firmness of mind and kindly feeling are strikingly limned by the artist's pencil.

As the time for the execution approached Jane was constantly engaged in prayer, and excited the sympathy of all who approached her. The Governor of the Tower "much marvelled that one so young could display so philosophic an indifference to the things of earth." Maister Ludlow, who was present, writes that "she did not fear to die, but rather rejoiced as the time approached."

In her short passage from the prison to the scaffold, the fortitude of Lady Jane was terribly tried by meeting the headless body of her husband borne back to the Tower. Grafton gives this account of the scene:—

"The Lord Guildfurde Dudley's dead carkas lyin in a carre in strawe was againe brought into the Tower at the same instant that my Ladi Jane his wyfe went to her deathe within the Tower, which myserable sight was to her a duple sorrowe and grieve."

The "girl widow" paused, and gazed at the woful spectacle, raised her eyes to heaven, and in silence walked on. The agony of death seemed past. It has been alleged by some Puritan writers that the Queen "ordered the cart containing the bloody remains of Dudley, to pass under Jane's window, that she might see it." This statement is unsustained by any State Paper, or by any author worthy

of credit; "meeting with the cart" appears to have been accidentally, or, at worst, the thoughtlessness of not oversensitive officials. What could the Sovereign have had to do with arrangements which lay between the Governor of the Tower and the headsman's assistants? Sharon Turner—a writer not likely to give Queen Mary much credit for humanity—is of opinion that "the meeting with the bleeding body was purely accidental."

A few words as to Guildford Dudley. This "boy-man" was the most unimportant victim *per se* that ever mounted a scaffold for treason. His "mother's pet," a spoiled obstinate boy, who, in his brief kingship, wept for not being worshipped. Devoid of talent, as he was of every hopeful manly virtue, he yearned for a throne without the genius or principle to fill an honest subordinate position. His bad, imperious mother gave him evil advice, and was privy to his despicable ill-treatment of his young wife, whom he "struck and swore at on several occasions."

Lady Jane, whose short life seemed but a rehearsal for the final tragedy, endured the ill-treatment without a murmur, merely observing: "*It is the duty of a wife to obey her husband and love him too.*"* The bitterest of comments on a man with an atom of feeling or generosity. In religion, too, Guildford Dudley was his father's son. If he had the sense or principle to be any thing, he was not a Reformer, but one of a family who put on their religion like a doublet, and worshipped Heaven—if they ever

* The object of Lady Jane's first love was young Lord Hertford, to whom she was actually engaged, and consequently could not legally marry Lord Dudley. Dudley and Jane were of the most opposite sentiments and tastes on every subject.

did worship—at the altar of political expediency. Lord Guildford was not the man to die a martyr for any creed, nor did his death partake even so much of martyrdom as that it was compassed, as has been so often alleged, by Dr. Gardyner. It was not the Bishop of Winchester, in fact, but the Earl of Pembroke, who, from selfish hatred to the unfortunate youth, wrought his death. The young man, as to religious sentiment, was the opposite of his wife. Raised against her will to a throne by those who hated and maltreated, whilst they used her, she conscientiously repelled the ambition which devoured her giddy helpmate. The fatal height to which he aspired, and from which he was so soon prostrated, was the sole aspiration of Lord Guildford Dudley; and it is the mere reverse of fact and common-sense to set him down as a Protestant martyr.* A Protestant martyr! He was the mere “witness”—to use the word in its classic sense—of the inordinate ambition of stronger and more evil minds.

Jane Dudley was not executed on the Tower Hill, on the same spot as her husband. She suffered on a scaffold “specially erected on the green,” within the Tower. There were some five hundred persons present. The Abbot Feckenham accompanied Lady Dudley to the scaffold, which he ascended with a crucifix in his hand. In parting with Feckenham Lady Jane expressed her gratitude for his humanity and the kindness she received from him.†

After six months’ sorrowful confinement, Lady Dudley

* It is not generally known that Lord Guildford Dudley returned to the Catholic religion before his death. Like his father and brothers, he recanted his supposed Protestantism whilst in the Tower. He was attended to the scaffold by two Benedictine Fathers.

† Godwin’s Queen Mary.

looked pale and worn. "When she appeared on the scaffold," writes a spectator, "the people cried and murmured at beholding one so young and so beautiful, about to die such a death." There were nearly forty matrons present. Coming to the front of the scaffold, Lady Jane addressed the Lords Commissioners and the populace in these words:—

"My Lords, and you good Christian people, who have come to see me die, let me tell you that I am under a law, and by that law, as a never-erring judge, I am condemned to die, not for anything I have offended the Queen's Majesty, for I will wash my hands guiltless thereof, and deliver to my God a soul as pure from such trespasses as innocence from injustice; but only for that I consented to the thing which I was enforced unto, constraint making the law believe I did that which I never understood. Notwithstanding, I have offended Almighty God in that I have followed over much the lust of mine own flesh, and the pleasures of this wretched world. Neither have I lived according to the knowledge that God hath given me, for which cause God hath appointed unto me this kind of death, and that most worthily, according to my deserts. Howbeit, I thank the Almighty God most heartily that He hath given me time to repent of my past sins, and neglect of doing good, as much as I could perform, in this wicked world. I humbly beg for mercy from my dear Redeemer, whom my former vanity and forgetfulness of Him have displeased. May the Great Creator of Heaven and earth have mercy on me, and blot out the record of my errors.

"And now, good people—men and women—I earnestly ask from you a small favour. Will you pray for me, *whilst I am still alive*, that the Almighty God of His infinite goodness and mercy will forgive me my sins, how numberless and grievous soever against Him? And I beseech you all to bear me witness that I here die a true Christian woman, professing and avouching from my soul that I trust to be saved by the blood, passion, and merits of Jesus Christ my Saviour *only, and by none other means*, casting far behind me all the works and merits of mine own actions, as things so far short of the true duty I owe, that I tremble to think how much they may

stand in judgment against me. I wish our good Queen to forgive me for my unintentional disloyalty to her; and may God protect her from her enemies, and give her a long and a happy reign. A few words more: Husbands and wives love one another, and bring up your children in the fear of God."

After an affecting pause, Lady Dudley continued:—

"Now, good people, Jane Dudley bids you all a long farewell. And may the Almighty preserve you from ever meeting the terrible death which awaits her in a few minutes. Farewell, farewell, for ever more."*

The narrator of this address describes Lady Dudley as "immensely affected, resting her head upon the neck of her old nurse, who clung to her to the death-scene."

Lady Dudley's maids having advanced to the place in which she stood, she prepared to meet her sad and early doom. Elizabeth Tyluey, her devoted friend, stood beside her until the last moment of the tragedy.

"Lady Dudley was very brave of heart," observes Maister Radcliffe, "considering the condition she was in."†

Farlow affirms "that Lady Jane maintained her Protestant principles to the death, which was very unlike her relatives, who all ran back to superstition and Popery again."

We now approach the closing scene. Lady Jane *tied the handkerchief before her own eyes, and then felt for the block, observing, What shall I do? Where is it?*" One of the gentlemen on the scaffold guided her to the spot, when

* The above is translated from an original report taken down by Philippa de Clifford, a kinswoman of Lady Jane and the Earl of Cumberland.

† Fuller states that it was "strongly bruited" at the time of the execution that Lady Jane Dudley was pregnant. Challoner seems to believe this report; and Pomeroy says "there can be no doubt but she was with child." Sir Harris Nicolas, and other historical authorities of high repute, give no credit to this statement.

she knelt down and laid her head on the fatal pillow. Stretching forth her body she exclaimed in a firm voice, "Lord, into thy hands I commend my spirit." The usual five minutes for "royal mercy," appeared like an age to those present; it was one of breathless suspense; but no "white wand bearing *mercy* appeared"—none whatever—every hope had fled! It would appear as if Queen Mary and her Council had disregarded the words which are said to be emblazoned on the seal of the Recording Angel—"Mercy, Mercy!" The minutes and seconds might now be counted. A tall and powerful headsman next approached and made his fearful obeisance to the Royal victim. Jane spoke her last words—"I die in peace with all people; God bless the Queen."*

In a few moments the executioner raised the glittering steel, and the career of Jane Dudley finished on earth.

Noailles, the French Ambassador, who was present, observes, "there was a great effusion of blood."

"The headless body," writes Pierre Derenzie, "lay for some hours half naked on the scaffold, where the blood ran down in a stream." The most inhuman of beings cannot defend such barbarity.

What an awful spectacle this judicial murder presented, for Lady Jane was the victim of a party—domestic and political! The brief splendour of her royalty was but as the passing sunbeam lighting up a grave. She was unhappy throughout life; unblest in her parents—a fine humane and comprehensive mind, driven and narrowed into

* The Ende of the Ladie Jane Dudlie on the Scaffulde, printed at Antwerp A.D. 1560.

a belief which was but simulated in those on whom she naturally placed reliance; infelicitous in her compelled espousals, yet, with conscientious dutifulness, loving at the death more than in the life. If ambition ever had a martyr who deserved the name, it was the pure-minded and high-souled Jane Dudley. Her fate is one of the saddest episodes on the roll of England's history.*

John Foxe has printed some letters said to be the composition of Jane Dudley about the time of her condemnation. Those documents, of whose authorship Foxe may not be accused, breathe a philosophic contempt of death, sublime sentiments of piety, and a profound scorn for the creed of her fathers.† Yet it is difficult to imagine that the grand-daughter of Mary Tudor, not seventeen years of age, could have written those (for the time) wonderful letters. Are they not evidently the careful composition of some man of middle age, fired by intense hostility to the religion he had recently abandoned? One of Maister Foxe's special talents was that of "dressing up," and placing in what Oldmixon styled "historical form," the ready and malign concoctions of contemporaneous fanatics or fools.

It appears strange, even in a period of such "mutable mentality," that the mother of Jane Dudley, in a few weeks subsequent to her daughter's execution, became a lady-in-

* There is a beautiful little illuminated Prayer Book in Latin, enclosed in a well-preserved morocco case, in the British Museum, which book Lady Jane had with her on the scaffold. On the flyleaf is some writing of Lady Dudley's, in a fine bold hand: "*Lord I trust in Thee: let me never be confounded.*" The writing concludes: "*Yours as the Lord knoweth, JANE DUDLEY.*" Close by this interesting memorial is a "Book of Prayers," in the handwriting of the Princess Elizabeth, executed in 1545, when the writer was scarcely twelve years old.

† Foxe's Memorials, vol. iii.

waiting to Queen Mary ; and “ her confidential attendant at Mass.”* If the mother of Jane Dudley believed that Queen Mary had of her own will sacrificed her daughter, she must have been an unnatural parent to appear at Court under the circumstances. Catharine and Mary Gray acted in a manner similar to that of their mother. On the other hand, if Queen Mary had, of her own will and motion, sent Lady Jane to the scaffold, would she, in a few weeks afterwards have brought her mother to Court, and even enrolled her amongst her bosom friends ? Does not this fact go very far to prove that the fate of Jane Dudley had been decided, *not* by the Sovereign, but by *her Ministers* ? Again, let the reader remember that the men who condemned Lady Jane, and who impressed upon the Queen the necessity of her death, had been previously Jane’s sworn supporters, whilst swearing to Mary that they *had been all along her own true and faithful subjects* ; and that on the death of Mary, the majority of her Ministers became members of Elizabeth’s Council, and aided and abetted that unforgiving woman in persecuting to the death the female members of the unfortunate House of Dorset ? Versatile reprobates like these would shroud in darkness the character of any Sovereign, and it is no marvel, then, that the memory of Mary has been overcast by the evil shadows of her councillors, who were at once the parasites and the tyrants of their Queen.

In the reign of Elizabeth, Lady Jane’s mother “ descended from her station ” to marry one of her domestics—a young man named Adrian Stoke. There is an old Norfolk tradi-

* Miss Strickland’s *Queens of England*, vol. iii. ; Pomeroy’s *Chronicle* ; Letters of Roger Ascham on the Misfortunes of the House of Dorset.

tion that Queen Elizabeth gave expression to her indignation on this occasion, exclaiming: "What! has the old toothless hag married her stable-boy and disgraced an ancient family? An old woman with a young husband! Fie on her! I should send the ladie to Paul's Cross to do penance."* Aikin's "Court of Elizabeth" gives another version of this gossip, yet it agrees in the principal facts. The Duchess of Suffolk† was not, however, "a toothless old hag," as Elizabeth so acidly remarked, but a fine fresh-looking widow, "fat, fair and forty," who was only fifteen at her first marriage. Camden states that the husband of the Duchess was no menial. He was a private gentleman, young and handsome. "It was bruited that the Duchess of Suffolk wrote to Elizabeth asking the Queen to follow her example, and to marry her own sweet Robin."

* In the reign of Richard III., Bess Radclyffe, of Surrey, a dame of eighty-six, did public penance at St. Paul's Cross for having by "sorcery" induced a youth of eighteen to marry her.

† The reader must not confound the above Duchess of Suffolk with the widow of the Duke of Suffolk, known as Charles Brandon.

CHAPTER XXX.

MISFORTUNES OF THE HOUSE OF DORSET.

HENRY GRAY, Marquis of Dorset, was descended from Sir John Gray, of Groby, the first husband of Elizabeth Woodyeville, subsequently Queen Consort of Edward IV. The Marquis of Dorset was possessed of an ample fortune, and dispensed hospitality at a profuse rate to country squires, clergy, and yeomen. He had no pretensions to be a statesman or soldier, and his chief pleasure lay "in a country life amongst the hawking, hunting, and boisterous barons and lusty drinkalds of degree." In this respect he was no worse than the majority of his order. He was, like too many of his class, obtuse, obstinate, weak-minded, treacherous. He had no principle upon any subject, although he was loud-voiced in support of the Reformation; but then he had received a portion of the Church property, which may account for his "new convictions." He was as haughty and ignorant as his father-in-law, Charles Duke of Suffolk. His private life was an act of continued scandal. When he married the Duke of Suffolk's daughter, his *first wife*, the young and beautiful Lady Catharine Fitzalan, sister of Henry, seventeenth Earl of Arundel, *was still alive*, and for many years subsequent.* If the question of the Marquis of

* Pomeroy's Chronicle; Ascham and several other contemporaries allude to this incident; Morrice states, "that it was bruited that my Lord of Dorset

Dorset's marriage with Lady Fitzalan were judicially examined, Lady Jane Gray must certainly have been declared illegitimate. In what light, then, could Cranmer advocate her claim as the grand-niece of Henry VIII.? It is very possible, however, that Cranmer never knew of the Marquis of Dorset having *two wives living at the same time*. But it is strange if the wily and far-seeing Northumberland could have been deceived as to the legitimacy of Jane Gray. If he had any certain knowledge of the fact he would have been the last man living to embark in such a doubly perilous adventure. On other grounds, however, Cranmer did not hold a good opinion of his friend Dorset, who was unscrupulous in the pursuit of Church plunder. In 1550 the Archbishop remonstrated with him for "*still dispoiling and maintaining Church property.*"* "*It is an old saying,*" writes Dr. Cranmer, "*that nobody can grow rich by the stealing and taking of private people's possessions, much less robbing the public. What sense then hath he of God, that doubts not that his riches shall increase to good purpose, that commits sacrilege, and robs the Church of what belongs to it?*"† This is an outspoken and courageous statement. It did not, however, come with a good grace from the Archbishop of Canterbury to argue in that style. The reader has seen in preceding chapters the "allotments" made to Cranmer of monastic property and hospital endowments. "*De me non hæc narrantur,*" probably thought the Archbishop.

had several wives, like his father-in-law, the Duke of Suffolk." Subsequent writers have made the matter pretty clear.

* Strype's Memorials; Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. vi.; Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. vii.

† Strype's Memorials of Cranmer, vol. iv. p. 299.

Dorset's second attempt at rebellion, whilst Lady Jane lay under sentence of death in the Tower, was not approved by the Reformers who supported the cause of that lady. His ingratitude and treachery to his lawful Sovereign ; his disregard of his unfortunate daughter's perilous position at the time, and his baseness in attempting to purchase his own pardon by accusing his friends of treason, excited public indignation against him.* He fell unpitied. His character has been unfairly represented by sectarian feeling. He was not, however, the man for whom any party should contend. Sir Harris Nicolas represents him as a "quiet, unambitious man." His reckless love of intrigue and daring adventure in Mary's reign present him in a very different light. Dugdale states that he was "neither disliked nor much regarded." Some of his contemporaries considered him "devoid of judgment, rash, cowardly, and treacherous." Dr. Nares, the biographer of Lord Burleigh, draws a glowing picture of the Marquis of Dorset. He describes him "as the patron and friend of such men as Aylmer and Bullinger, and the eminent Reformers of his time." When compared with State Papers, this panegyric must be taken for what it is worth. He was, however, soon arrested. Having concealed himself in the "hollow of a tree for two days and two nights, and being without food, he ventured to the cottage of an old domestic to seek even a crust of bread," and whilst there he was betrayed, and sold for £100; the reward offered by the new Government for his head.

The Marquis of Dorset might have traced all the misfortunes of his ancient house to the family connection with

* Lingard's History of England, vol. v. p. 433.

the Dudleys. Pardoned by his Sovereign, he again became a traitor; was betrayed by his own domestic—some allege by his mistress; immured in the Tower; tried for treason according to the cruel code of those times; adjudged for death, without pity or hope, he ascended the scaffold with courage; expressed his sorrow for having brought dishonour and shame upon a time-honoured family, and wished the Queen a long and prosperous reign. His last words were: "I desire to die in peace with every one." Foxe states he "made a goodly end." On the other hand, Father Weston, who was present at the Queen's command, "did not," writes Collier, "look upon Lord Dorset as a heretic." Stowe and Pomeroy are puzzled as to what creed Dorset professed at his death. Perhaps something after the fashion of Dr. Wotton, who proclaimed his devotion to be equal for the "new and the old learning." The Hot-Gospel and Puritan writers applaud Dorset's actions, "but unfortunately he failed." And those writers have also failed in establishing Dorset's claims to be styled "either a Papist or a Protestant martyr." He was no ornament to any party. Northumberland had created him Duke of Suffolk, a title which he did not long enjoy.

Lord Thomas Gray, brother to the Marquis of Dorset, was also executed for high treason. He was a man of talent, high spirit, and great ambition. There is some reason to believe that this nobleman induced his elder brother to embark a second time in treason. He professed to be an earnest friend of the Reformation. It is stated, on doubtful authority, that he sent for a confessor the night before his execution. It is certain, however, that the great majority of those executed for treason in Mary's reign

desired to have a confessor ; Jane Dudley was the exception ; yet, as before shown, she did not at the scaffold, repel the services of the Abbot Feckenham ; but there can be no doubt of her Puritan Protestantism. In early youth Lord Thomas Gray was regarded as a pious Catholic, and resided for some time in the Palace of the Bishop of London. Four members of the Gray family died on the scaffold—namely, the Marquis of Dorset, his daughter, Jane Dudley, and his two brothers, Lords Leonard and Thomas Gray.

The misfortunes of the House of Dorset did not end here. In 1560, Catharine Gray formed a clandestine marriage with the Earl of Hertford, son of the Protector Somerset. When Queen Elizabeth was informed of this love-match, she expressed her indignation at Catharine “daring to marry without the royal permission.” By a despotic stretch of authority, familiar to the Tudors, Catharine Gray was sent to the Tower ; Lord Hertford, in the meantime, was summoned to produce evidence of the marriage by a certain day, before special Commissioners named by the Queen, from whose decision “no appeal was to lie.” The “proofs” were not forthcoming at the time, but no one doubted the fact of the marriage. As the sister of Jane Dudley, Catharine Gray was mortally hated by Elizabeth, who only required some pretext to deprive her of liberty. Lord Hertford was arrested and committed to the Tower, and orders were sent by the Queen to the governor that Hertford and his wife “were to be kept separate ; that on no pretext should they ever see one another, even at a distance.”* Maister Warner, the Constable of the Tower,

* State Papers of Elizabeth's reign.

who was a man exceptionally humane for his office, hearing that the unfortunate Hertford and his wife were greatly attached to each other, permitted them to reside together. At last Elizabeth discovered that Lady Catharine had become the mother of two children; and then was the royal vengeance carried out against all concerned. The Constable of the Tower was dismissed, and whatever private means he possessed confiscated. By a Star Chamber decree, Lord Hertford was fined £15,000 for being the father of the two innocent children, and the mother was removed to the custody of another gaoler, whose "fame," to use the phrase, excited no fear for his humanity. The Countess remained a close prisoner for *seven years, and then died, without seeing either her husband or her children.* Hertford's property was seized upon to pay the fine, and he remained a *prisoner for nine years.** Popular feeling ran high at the time, and the question was repeatedly asked by some influential and courageous persons, "By what right—or on what principle—does her Highness the Queen keep asunder those whom God hath joined together?" The apologists of Sir William Cecil and Elizabeth replied, "that the punishment *was too mild—that it should have been far more severe.*" A warning was also given to the "talkers" not to "*wag their saucy tongues in finding fault with the Queen's actions.*"† In these cruel persecutions Cecil took an active part against the son of his former patron, Somerset. The newly adopted Protestantism of the Seymours and Grays did not save them from the hatred of Elizabeth. Mary Gray, a younger sister, who was somewhat deformed, married "without the

* *Misfortunes of the House of Dorset* (black letter), 1568.

† *Queens of England*, vol. iv.; *Princesses of the House of Tudor*.

Queen's permission" and was committed to the custody of Sir William Cecil, and not permitted to see her husband. She became a Protestant of the Puritan type, but as she was detained a prisoner from *private hate*, her change of religion did nothing to promote her liberty. Lady Hertford, also, became a Protestant; but on her death-bed recanted. The Grays were, like so many leading families of the time, professing Catholics, when it was not more safe or profitable to be Protestant.

A head was recently discovered in the vaults of the Church of the Holy Trinity, in the Minories. Of this "grisly relic of mortality," a contemporary student of history supplies "particular reasons why the severed head of Henry Gray should find a resting-place in the church of the Holy Trinity, inasmuch as attached to the church in question was the nunnery of St. Clare, a foundation suppressed by Henry VIII., who confiscated it for the use of the Crown. Edward VI. gave the convent to the Duke of Suffolk in 1552, only two years before Suffolk's execution. It is thus probable that the "Poor Clares," when they were restored to their nunnery by Queen Mary—to be turned out again by Elizabeth—should have begged the head of Suffolk, and placed it in the vault of the adjacent church.

If the nuns did request the head of their decollated persecutor, it was only what might have been expected from the forgiving charity which formed the elements of their observance—for Suffolk, when he obtained the grant of the income and belongings of their nunnery, paid scant heed to the destitution of the sisterhood. More probable is it that some faithful henchman of the Duke of Suffolk, as in

the case of the Duke of Northumberland, besought the authorities for the head of his master.

However this may be, it would not be much of a mistake to aver that the head, so lately discovered, is that of Henry Gray, father of Lady Jane Dudley. Traditions of the Old City of London and obscure pamphlets, go far to prove the identity of that "busy brain-box" which once stirred a kingdom, and then became dumb for ever beneath the headsman's axe.

To the expert who may not have had the opportunity of seeing this grim and parched vestige of humanity, it may be interesting to learn that the head is completely bald, the eyes sunken beyond view, covered with the parchment lids; the small and well-shaped mouth open, with three of the upper teeth prominent and still undecayed; the ears are small and yet retain their position. As the writer has placed his finger within the mouth of this sad remnant of the once aspiring Dorset, he must fain descend to the painful particularity of stating that his decapitation was practically decollation—for the *neck*, so far as to the shoulders, still appertains to the head. The point of severance shows as if the execution were performed by a fearfully jagged blunt instrument—an unsharpened axe, or perhaps common wood chopper. In those times headsmen often purchased substitutes, whilst they themselves emptied wine-skins in the vintries of Crutched Friars, leaving the victims of the block subjected to the tortures of their masked mercenaries, who inflicted death as they pleased.

CHAPTER XXXI.

QUEEN MARY AND HER PARLIAMENT.

THE preparations for the Coronation of the Queen turned the public mind from the recent executions. This time-honoured ceremony was delayed several weeks longer than was intended, from the fact that the Royal Treasury was completely exhausted. It is related in a State Paper of the period, that there was not *one penny* in the purse of the Royal Treasurer to provide for the expenses of the coronation. The Queen was, therefore, compelled to borrow £20,000 from six London merchants who were devoted to the royal cause.*

“It must be admitted,” writes Lord Campbell, “that the earliest measures of Queen Mary’s reign, prompted by Dr. Gardyner, were highly praiseworthy. The depreciated currency was restored; a new coinage came out of sovereigns, and half-sovereigns, according to the old standard; the subsidy extorted from the late Parliament was remitted; and to discountenance Puritanical severity, the festivities which distinguished the Court in the time of Henry VIII. were restored. No complaint could, up to this period, be made of undue severity in punishing the late rebellious move-

* State Papers of Mary’s Reign; Strype’s Memorials, vol. iii.

ments in favour of Queen Jane ; for though that unfortunate lady and her husband were convicted of high treason, Northumberland only, and two of his associates, were sent to the scaffold at that time."

The coronation took place on the 1st of October, 1553. Three days before the ceremony the Queen removed from St. James's Palace to Whitehall, and took " barge at the stairs," accompanied by her sister Elizabeth, and a number of ladies, and proceeded to the Tower, where great feasting and rejoicing continued for two days. The Queen created fifteen knights, amongst whom were her kinsmen, Courtenay, Earl of Devonshire, and the young Earl of Surrey.

The public procession to the City presented a grand display, and was remarkable for the vast concourse of women of every rank and station who attended it.* The Queen headed the procession of ladies, seated in a litter drawn by six white horses, covered with housings of cloth of silver. Her Highness was dressed in a gown of velvet, trimmed with ermine. On her head was a caul of gold network, studded with pearls and precious stones. The Princess Elizabeth came next in an open chariot, covered with crimson velvet; Anne of Cleves was seated beside " the golden Eliza ;" they were both dressed in robes of cloth of silver, with large hanging sleeves. Then followed three hundred and sixty ladies on horseback, with superb appointments. Music and incense greeted the procession along its route, and the acclamations of the people were loud and

* At the Coronation of Queen Mary's mother, an immense number of women of all ranks attended. The programme of the Order of Procession was arranged by Queen Katharine herself.

frequent. In Fenchurch Street four giants, dressed in antique costume, made congratulatory speeches to the Queen; in Gracechurch Street the Florentine merchants presented "an angel dressed in green, and standing on a triumphal arch; when the angel lifted its gigantic arm with the trumpet to its mouth, the people emitted a shout of astonishment." The conduits at Cornhill and Cheapside ran with wine. The foreigners present were evidently astonished at the fine clothing and luxuries displayed by the citizens of London. In Cheapside the City merchants presented their Sovereign with "a benevolence" of one thousand marks in a crimson purse. At St. Paul's, the Queen's poet and musician, Heywood, sat under an old vine and delivered an eloquent welcome to his Royal mistress.

On the day of the coronation, the Princess Elizabeth walked behind the Queen, and Anne of Cleves followed. Elizabeth received all the honours due to her station. In relation to the above ceremony, Miss Strickland styles Anne of Cleves as King Henry's *widow*. This is not complimentary to Cranmer's judgment in the divorce of Anne of Cleves. If Anne were the King's *widow*, in what light are we to view Catharine Parr?

Gardynr, Bishop of Winchester, assisted by ten prelates, performed the coronation ceremony. Holgate and Cranmer, the Archbishops of York and Canterbury, were then prisoners in the Tower; but during the coronation festivities they had "perfect liberty to go in and out," and Cranmer was actually absent for three days, and returned again to prison. John Foxe and Dr. Sandys concur in the truth of this statement.

At the grand banquet which followed the coronation, the Duke of Norfolk, according to olden custom, "ushered in the first course on horseback," accompanied by the Earl of Shrewsbury, as Lord High Steward of England.

At this entertainment the Princess Elizabeth was treated with special attention by the Queen. "This incident," writes Sir Anthony Brown, "was not well received by the old Catholic party, who hated the Princess Elizabeth just as much as they disliked her mother."

Four days subsequent to the coronation festivities, the Queen opened her first Parliament, when nearly every statute passed in the reign of Edward VI. against the olden religion was repealed ; as were also the cruel laws of Henry VIII.'s reign. Some useful statutes were likewise enacted for regulating trade and commerce. This Parliament of Mary restored the Church to the position in which it stood at the death of Henry—"Catholic, but still anti-Papal" (owing, of course, to the confiscation of monastic property), with the Queen reluctantly holding the Headship, on the counsel of Bishop Gardyner, who had not yet made up his mind to be reconciled to the Pope.* Whilst Mary held this position, be it remembered, *no one suffered persecution for religious opinions in England*. Those terrible scenes did not take place until her Highness relinquished all claim to be "Head of the Church," declaring that "the Pope alone was Christ's Vicar."

On the 6th of December, the Queen came down to the Parliament and gave her consent to thirty-one new Acts, her Highness touching each statute with her sceptre.

* Dodd's Church History, vol. i.

Queen Anne was the last English monarch who performed this ceremony.*

When the Queen gave her assent to the Bills passed by Parliament, it was approaching Christmas, and she told "all parties to go their ways home; to honour the season as English Catholics hitherto did; to give large hospitality, and not to forget the claims of the poor and the ailing upon their bounty."

If Mary's Parliaments had been as honest as herself, her reign would have been the pride of the country, instead of its reproach, because, if they had done their duty in guarding their fellow-creatures from sanguinary penal laws regarding religion, Queen Mary, by her first regal act, in restoring the ancient free Constitution of the Plantagenets, would have had put it out of the power of the members of her own Government to wreak personal and furtive revenge on any individual who opposed it. She exerted all the energy of her undoubted eloquence to impress on the minds of her judges that they were to act as independent umpires between herself and her people. She had no standing army to awe Parliament, no riches to bribe the legislature.

I have already remarked that the great majority of Mary's Parliament—Peers and Commons—were as dishonest and corrupt as those who had preceded them in the two previous reigns. They were a plastic race—those law-dispensers of the day—indifferent to all religions, and willing to establish any creed, or have no creed, so that they might retain the "loot" which had enriched them. The

* Parliamentary History, vol. iii p. 332.

House of Lords, who in Mary's reign legalized the cruel persecutions of the Reformers, were the *very same individuals who had planted so recently the Protestant Church in England.** The reign of Henry VIII. corrupted all, high and low, and imbued the temperament of men in power with a ferocity before unknown to the English character. The few who composed the House of Lords were thoroughly debased. Many of the ancient nobility who had advised or controlled the Sovereign in former times, were cut off by Henry VIII., and their places filled up by the political servants and creatures of the King. Needy, mean, dishonourable and of low extraction, they were men whose fathers had been mace-bearers to judges, traders of London, silk-mercens, usurers, dicing knights, lawyers without a character or a shade of conscience, country squires who were raised to the peerage for marrying a mistress of the King, or those of his Ministers, supplemented by adventurers who became landed proprietors through the plunder of the Church.† Such were the "nobles" who composed the English House of Peers in Mary's reign, numbering not more than fifty-four.

Queen Mary had, by previous proclamation, remitted two heavy property taxes—one on lands and the other on goods—which had been left as a legacy from the impositions of Edward VI.'s Government. As Mary had no private property of her own, and as she had honestly restored the estates of several of the nobility which her father had confiscated, and had resolved not to touch

* Queens of England, vol. v. p. 411; State Papers of Queen Mary's reign.

† In the days of Edward III., there were 40,000 parishes in England. At the close of the reign of Edward VI., there were only 25,000 parishes. What became of the revenues

any part of the Church lands retained by the Crown, it must be owned that she commenced her government in a state of personal poverty low enough to exonerate her from any charge of bribing her Parliament. Burnet and Rapin, however, have affirmed that the Emperor Charles furnished the funds for bribing that Parliament. If this statement had any foundation in fact, the "Parliament coves," as the Anabaptists styled them, were very ungrateful, since the only measures in which they opposed Queen Mary's wishes were those relating to her marriage with the Emperor's son.*

The first act of legislation was to restore the English "lawes" to the state, regarding life and property, in which they stood in the twenty-fifth year of Edward III. From the accession of the Tudor line a lamentable change had taken place. In the days of the Plantagenets, an open or overt act of violence or war against the Sovereign was needful before a man could be attainted; in the third year of Henry VIII. "a supposed knowledge of conspiracy was sufficient to incur all the penalties of treason." Few of Henry's numerous victims could have been put to death according to the ancient laws. Towards the end of Henry's reign the English statute-book became a disgrace to civilization—a black book of judicial murder. In the words of a German commentator, "the King and his advisers were steeped to the lips in crime, and their hands red with innocent blood." The old Saxon Chroniclers relate that William of Normandy and his sons made cruel laws for the protection of game. They acted according to the

* *Queens of England*, vol. v. (first edit.); *Tytler's Edward and Mary*, vol. ii.; *Records of Queen Mary's Parliament*.

rude idea entertained in those days by successful soldiers of fortune, who despised the sanction of laws enacted by a legislative body; but Henry VIII. found a Parliament composed of persons supposed to be civilized and honest men, who passed a law to make it death for an Englishman to take a hawk's egg. This statute was passed in the twenty-fifth year of Henry's reign. In the thirty-first year of the same monarch's career, the laws became more severe. "Conjuring, sorcery, witchcraft, and 'digging up crosses,'" were punished with death. The Act under which Surrey the poet perished "was made law at the King's request," in the thirty-third year of Henry's reign. The most petty offence was death, and the "mode of death" varied according to the crime,* or the alleged criminal. The conduct of the gaolers and executioners was indescribably horrible. Many of the worst statutes of Henry's reign were repealed by Queen Mary; but reenacted by Elizabeth in even a more odious form.† A viler body of men never dishonoured England at any period than the Parliaments of Edward and Mary, and, with a few exceptions, *they were the same men in both reigns.*‡

The Parliament had some customs, now obsolete. It was necessary for a Peer to obtain leave of absence from the Sovereign. If a member of the Commons absented himself, without having received permission, his pay was "cut off," for some time, to be decided by the Speaker and the King's Treasurer.§

It may be of some interest here to note the opinion of the ambassador at the Court of England of the "Queen

* Statutes of the Realm; Holinshed, vol. i.

† Parliamentary History, vol. iii.

‡ See Records of the Times, Social and Political. § Harl. MS., 980.

of the Adriatic," then in the zenith of her glory—Venice, the valiant antagonist of Moslem barbarism, who so long stemmed the torrent of Turkish conquest that was finally swept back from the walls of Vienna by John Sobieski, whose heroic Poland ungrateful Europe afterwards permitted to be so cruelly partitioned and devoured.

Soranzo, the Venetian ambassador, at this time (1553), writing to the Doge of Venice, presents "England and its people" in a favourable light.

"The English," writes this observant diplomatist, "are, for the most part handsome of stature, with good constitution; complexions red or white. According to their stations, they are well dressed. The dress of the men resembles the Italian fashion, and that of the women the French style. The nobility and great knights are courteous and kindly to foreigners. They have grand establishments. The Earl of Pembroke keeps upwards of one thousand men clad in magnificent livery, besides his other retainers. From the nobles down to the shop-keepers, all classes are profuse in their hospitality. The women, who are all pretty and kind-hearted, enjoy many privileges from their husbands, which the women of other countries know not of."

The Lord Mayor of London was always an object of curiosity to foreigners. Signor Soranzo was delighted at his introduction to Sir Thomas Whyte, the Lord Mayor at the period of Wyatt's rebellion. The chief magistrate was a wealthy tailor, and a most loyal subject of the Queen. He was also the patron of learning, having largely endowed St. John's College, Oxford. Soranzo, in his despatches to the Doge of Venice, draws a pleasing picture of the profuse hospitality of the Lord Mayor of London.

Owing to the many visits of the sweating sickness and "other scourges," the population of London was reduced at this period (1553) to 180,000.

CHAPTER XXXII.

DOMESTIC TRAITS OF QUEEN MARY.

AMONGST the presents made by Queen Mary, when Princess, to Jane Gray, was a gold necklace. The entry set down in the royal diary runs thus :—"A gold necklace to my dear little cousin Jane." There is no date to this entry; but other incidents lead me to believe that Jane Gray was then about ten years old. The necklace was probably a birthday present. The Tudors were always profuse in birthday presents to distinguished foreigners. Henry VIII. gave a diamond worth £2000 to Queen Isabel, his mother-in-law.

Many entries occur in Queen Mary's diary which prove her love of flowers, rare seeds, and roots. She was, in her youth, a tasteful horticulturist, and an importer of foreign plants. Her father gave £10 as a reward to Paul Goodchylde, for having brought safely to England several young trees and plants from Spain, which were ordered for the Princess's gardens.* Mary had a decided taste for clocks, like her illustrious relative Charles the Fifth, and clocks formed a prominent article in her yearly expenditure. Several valuable clocks were sent from Spain and Portugal

* Privy Purse Expenses of Henry VIII.

to the Princess as "birthday presents." Gloves—a very costly gift in those times—were also sent to her from Spain and Portugal. Her Highness gave a gentleman in the suite of the Lord Admiral, thirty shillings, for bringing her, from a Spanish Duchess, resident near Madrid, a coffer containing twelve pair of Spanish gloves. "Gloves of this kind," writes Miss Strickland, "bore a great price as late as the middle of the last century, and were probably some of the refined relics of Moorish industry. The gloves in question were made of exquisite leather, and embroidered with silk, gold, silver, and even with gems, and highly perfumed." The bigoted suspicions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England, instilled into the people by conscious or ignorant incitation, led them to believe that the Spanish gloves were actually poisoned—poisoned for the purpose of destroying Protestants. Even John Foxe, or Roger Rasper, the "Hot-Gospel Puritan," might feel ashamed of such a disregard of common sense, in the commercial relations between nations.

Lady Jane Dormer has left on record an interesting account of the manner of the Queen's life at Croydon. "Here her only amusement was walking, plainly dressed, with her ladies, and entering the cottages of the poor, and, unknown to them, relieving their wants. She likewise chose those of their children that seemed promising, for the benefits of education." This account agrees with her intelligent and gentle love for children, and the numerous godchildren and others, on whom she bestowed a great part of her narrow income in her youth. In 1537, the Princess Mary became the godmother of eighteen children; all of whom she visited frequently, and left them presents and money. She

was likewise godmother to one of Somerset's gifted daughters, Mary Seymour, who was baptized by Archbishop Cranmer.

Taylor, "the Poet of the Needle," makes some interesting allusions to the Queen's tapestry work for Windsor Castle and Hampton Court.

It is stated by a contemporary that Queen Mary felt a pleasure in elevating women of education and exalted virtue. She made Lady Berkley a justice of the peace for Gloucestershire, and Lady Rous was appointed justice of quorum for Suffolk; and the latter sat on the bench at assizes, as a justice of the peace in attendance upon the judges. Several cases in which women were wholly concerned were investigated by ladies, and their decisions gave satisfaction to the English judges.*

Amongst Queen Mary's personal friends were several of the wives and daughters of leading Reformers—such as the Duchess of Somerset, and Lady Bacon. The correspondence between the Queen and those ladies proves that religious differences did not go far in unbinding the ties of private friendship. I have already alluded to the relations which existed between the mother and sister of Jane Dudley and the Queen, which may appear strange to those "obstinate thinkers" who have faith still in Foxe and such annalists.

Among the distinguished ladies of Mary's Court the granddaughter of Sir Thomas More and the daughter of that illustrious English matron, Margaret Roper, stood in the front rank. The name of the lady in question was

* Queens of England, vol. v. (first edit.)

Margaret Basset ; her husband was also attached to the Queen's Court. Mrs. Basset was a most learned and amiable woman ; at an early age she translated Eusebius from the Greek into English.

Like her father, Mary Tudor was an excellent musician. She also understood Italian ; spoke Latin, Spanish, and French. At eleven years of age, she translated the prayer of St. Thomas Aquinas from the Latin. The construction of her head and throat gave a peculiar tone to her voice, which was that of " a large able-bodied man." Those who were much about the person of Queen Mary affirm that she never used the unbecoming language so frequent at the time in high circles. She was easy of access, and particularly kind to the poorer classes of her own sex.* The Duchess of Somerset relates many interesting anecdotes of the early life of Mary Tudor, and her intimacy with Jane Seymour, and the family of Lord Crumwell. Crumwell entertained a high respect for the Princess ; who was frequently his guest at the magnificent entertainments given by him. He made her most costly presents ; and it was bruited for a time, that Crumwell, who was then a widower, intended to procure the King's sanction for a marriage with Mary. But, notwithstanding all his ambition, Crumwell had far too much common sense to seriously contemplate such a perilous union.

Soranzo, the Venetian Ambassador, writing to the Doge, remarks—"The Queen of England is not of a strong constitution. She suffers from headache and affection of the heart, and has to be blooded, perhaps, too often. The Queen

* Michel's Despatches to the Doge of Venice.

is of very spare diet, and never eats any food until one of the clock, but drinks some warm milk. She attends in her private chapel every morning at an early hour. Her attention to public business is praiseworthy; often engaged with her Ministers till midnight. She will speak to her subjects, and is quite willing to hear everybody's grievance."

Queen Mary was small in stature; of a good figure, delicate-looking, and, as a courtier remarked, "moderately pretty." She was short-sighted, but her eyes were expressive and bright. Her portraits as a girl and a young woman vary much from each other, on account of the many fluctuations of her health. Her early portraits are often taken for those of Lady Jane Gray, to whom, in early youth, she had a family resemblance. The portrait of Queen Mary, by Sir Antonio More, is very much like Henry VIII. about the mouth and eyes. This picture is now amongst the Duke of Bedford's valuable collection of paintings.

The Venetian Envoy describes Elizabeth at the period of her sister's accession as "very popular with the people. The figure and face of the Princess Elizabeth," he says, "are very handsome, and such an air of dignified majesty pervades all her actions that no one can fail to suppose she is a royal lady." Elizabeth was about twenty-one years of age at this time.

CHAPTER XXXII.

THE QUEEN'S MARRIAGE.

FATHER PETO, who outlived the storms of Henry's reign, and was then in Rome, wrote a letter to the Queen advising her "against a marriage with a young husband at her time of life." His letter was not over-courteous, but it was what might be expected from the cleric who had the courage to tell her father to his face that he was "a wicked and an immoral man, and that the time would come when the dogs would lick his blood, as in the case of Ahab." "Do not marry," writes Peto to the Queen, "or you will be the slave of a young husband." However Mary might have felt chagrined at this mode of conveying an advice which was really honest, she expressed no displeasure in reference to the old confessor and friend of her mother. She had made up her mind to marry Philip of Spain, and neither Father Peto nor her Council could change her resolve. Dr. Gardyner repeatedly expressed opposition to the marriage, and placed many restrictions upon the privileges to be accorded to Philip as the Queen's husband. Mary wished to have King Philip crowned at Westminster Abbey; the Bishop of Winchester and the Council decided otherwise.* The proposed mar-

* See Martin's Chronicle; State (Domestic) Papers of Mary's reign; Queens of England. vol. v. (first edit.).

riage gave satisfaction to no party in the State. Catholic and Reformer were united on that point. In the meantime the preparations for the reception of Philip at Southampton, and the wedding which was to follow in a few days subsequent, were proceeded with on a striking scale of splendour.

The early matrimonial alliances made for Queen Mary when a child, took a strange turn in after years. In July, 1523, upon the departure of Charles V. from Windsor, he took leave of his affianced bride, the Princess Mary, then in her seventh year. Notwithstanding the emerald love-token worn on his little finger, Charles had no intention of marrying the Princess. The match, which had no other basis than political interest, fell through in time—artful Charles never dreaming that little Mary was destined not to marry till she became the wife of his son, Philip.*

Now to return to the incidents of some thirty years later. His Imperial Highness, the "High and Mighty Philip," accompanied by the combined fleets of England and Spain, arrived off Southampton from Corunna, on Friday, the 20th of July, 1554. The Council, the nobles, and the people of every shade of opinion, gave the illustrious bridegroom a respectful, but by no means a warm reception. There are several letters extant descriptive of Philip's person. One writer states that "Philip's complexion was cane-coloured; his hair sandy and scanty; his eyes small, blue, and weak, with a gloomy expression of face, which is not pleasing in a person of light complexion; a mighty

* Brewer's State Papers, vol. iii.

volume of brain, although it sloped too much towards the top of the head, denoting that he was a man of much ability." A Hampshire gentleman who stood near his Imperial Highness, on landing, thus describes his appearance:—"Of visage he is well favoured, with a broad forehead and grey eyes, straight-nosed and manly countenance; from his forehead to the point of his chin his face groweth small; his pace is princely, and his gait so straight and upright as he loseth no inch of his height; with a yellow head and a yellow beard; and to conclude, this great Prince is so well proportioned of body, arm, leg, and every other limb to the same as Nature cannot work a more perfect pattern. He is twenty-eight years of age."* His manners were cold and repulsive; yet he evinced, as well as his haughty nature would permit, a desire to become popular. Renaud states that "his royal master was full of hesitation as to whether he should come to England at all." From the reports forwarded to him his prospects were not cheering. The Anabaptist fanatics threatened vengeance; and the diplomatic envoy in London, alleged that "the Queen sent him a message to bring over his own cook, lest he should be poisoned in the food prepared for him."† A very cheering communication from his intended bride. It is possible, however, that this statement was gathered from Court gossip, and then "re-dressed" by that busy bee, M. de Renaud. Philip possessed one attribute at least which was certain to procure him popularity in England—not long before depleted by civil war, and now by civic confiscation—Philip was rich to repletion. The great

* John Elder's Letter; Queen Mary and Queen Jane.

† Renaud's Despatches to Charles V.

old Genoese had opened the Eldorado of a new world to the realm of united Spain, and the wealth of a recently discovered continent, was pouring into the lap of storied Iberia. And it must be allowed that Philip in right royal fashion dispensed his wealth, upon his arrival amongst his uncongenial insular hosts. He was profuse in costly presents to English nobles, gentlemen and ladies; he ransomed a number of poor debtors; aided orphans, widows, and people afflicted with lameness or blindness. His presents of jewels to the Queen were valued at fifty thousand golden ducats. His hospitality was on a magnificent scale; his expenditure of money amongst the people of London in various ways was almost incredible. The poor of London were entertained on several occasions by him to substantial roast beef and abundance of old English ale. In the way of private and public hospitality he was far more liberal than his wife. Mary, however, was accustomed for many years to live in seclusion, and to economize the small income allowed to her. Philip was bred in the "lap of Imperial luxury," and knew of no curtailment of Courtly living. He brought to England a quantity of bullion, sufficient to fill ninety-seven chests, each chest being a yard and a quarter long. This treasure was piled on twenty carts; it was displayed with some ostentation in its progress to the Tower to be coined. The citizens were much pleased with this replenishment to their currency, at that time dreadfully exhausted and debased by Henry VIII. and the Regencies of his son. Such a prince could not fail to be popular with the people, and especially the mercantile classes, who were much depressed in the reign of Edward. So Philip became very popular;

and although the Anabaptists denounced him, many of them partook largely of his bounty.

After several interviews of "a very kindly nature" on the part of the Queen, the marriage of Philip and Mary took place in the Cathedral of Winchester—just five days after the arrival of the Prince. Philip was attended to the high altar by sixty Spanish grandees. He was dressed in a robe of rich brocade bordered with large pearls and diamonds; his trunk-hose were of white satin worked with silver. He wore a collar of beaten gold, full of diamonds sparkling like stars; the jewel of the Golden Fleece was in its accustomed position; and at his knee was the Garter of England, studded with precious gems. Stephen Gardyner, Bishop of Winchester, in magnificent vestments, accompanied by five other prelates, stood before the altar, awaiting the arrival of the Queen. The Cathedral was filled with people who evinced a loyal wish to see their Queen married, especially to so rich a man as "Maister Prince Philip." The lower classes had an extravagant idea of his wealth; he was profuse in his "largesse," and relieved all those who made known their poverty to his chaplains.

A few minutes before eleven of the clock, the shouts of the Hampshire people announced the arrival of the Queen, who walked on foot, under a canopy, from the palace. She was accompanied by a large number of peers, knights, and squires. The rank and beauty of the English nobility were duly represented on the occasion.

The Queen was dressed in the French fashion, in a robe richly brocaded on a gold ground, with a long train splendidly bordered with pearls and diamonds of great size. The large *rebras* sleeves were turned up with clusters of gold,

set with pearls and diamonds. Her *chaperon* or *coif* was bordered with two rows of large diamonds. The close gown, or kirtle, worn beneath the robe was of white satin wrought with silver; on her breast the Queen wore that remarkable diamond of inestimable value sent to her as a gift by King Philip whilst he was still in Spain. The chair on which Queen Mary sat is still shown at Winchester Cathedral, and tradition states that it was a present from the Roman Pontiff.* The ceremony proceeded with great pomp. When the Bishop of Winchester asked, "Who gives away this bride?" the Marquis of Winchester, the Earls of Derby, Bedford, and Pembroke, came forward, and "in the name of the people of England gave away the bride." Here the vast crowds congregated in the Cathedral gave a loud shout, exclaiming, "God send them both happiness."

What a strange scene to behold! the Catholic Queen "given away in marriage" by the men here named, and who played such a remarkable part in the past and following reign. The Queen was wedded with a plain ring, like any other maiden. King Philip, according to the Catholic custom, laid on the Bishop's book a quantity of gold coins and some large silver pieces. When the Lady Margaret Douglas saw the coins, she opened the Queen's purse, and her Highness was observed to smile on her, as she put the bridal gold within it. Lady Margaret Douglas was the Queen's Scotch cousin, to whose romantic and eventful life I shall recur in the last volume of this work.

* *Queens of England*, vol. iii. (late edit.)

The hall of the episcopal palace in which the bridal banquet took place was hung with arras striped with gold and silver; it had a State dais raised at the upper end ascended by four steps. A table was here laid out for the King and Queen, at which the Bishop of Winchester, being Lord High Chancellor, held a prominent place. Below the dais were spread several tables on which the ladies of the Court, the Spanish grandees, and the English nobility were feasted. Here the Marquis of Winchester, with his polished and graceful manners, represented the Queen, and, in the words of Maister Huddlestone, "made the guests feel at home." A Court gossipper of the time states that "delightful music was performed in a gallery, and between the courses four heralds entered in their gorgeous mantles, and pronounced orations in the name of the people of England; also an eloquent address in favour of the royal marriage. King Philip made a conciliatory and kindly speech to the Privy Council; but his bride discoursed more "frequently." The banquet ended at six of the clock, when dancing "commenced in the most lively manner. All were very merrie; young and old were on the floor, and right gailie stepped it up and down the hall. At ten of the clock the wedding festivities concluded—all present drinking to the bride and bridegroom."*

When Philip and Mary visited London, they met with an enthusiastic reception. For a few weeks the epithets of "heretic" and "Papist" were laid aside, and all parties, for a time, seemed to act in "harmonie;" but the fiendish spirit of sectarian hate, retaliation, the mixed elements of

* Bacoardo's *Queen Mary*, vol. ii.

turbulence previously imported from Germany, and domestic insubordination slumbered but for a short time, to burst forth with renewed virulence and hate, involving perennial shame and sorrow for the nation. To govern or manage the so-called Reformers appears to have been almost impossible. The latent communistic spirit which pervaded all their proceedings "required to be met with strong repressive measures."* Party writers have styled those measures of repression "religious persecution." To make the judicious believe in the aptitude of this description—Reformation and Revolution, Protestantism and Confiscation, Communism, and the changes of that ill-omened epoch, may fairly be regarded as convertible terms. Never were religious sentiments so perverted.

The marriage, as might have been expected, from many circumstances, proved to be an unhappy one.† In the words of a writer upon those times, "the Queen saw in Philip the ideal of her imagination, and in Philip's feelings the reflex of her own; but the dream passed away—her love for her husband remained; but it remained only to be a torture to a sensitive heart."

Whilst the unhappy Queen remained suspended between life and death, only animated by a hope which every day became fainter, the conduct of her comparatively young husband was by no means edifying to her Court. Fortunately the Queen had chosen maids of honour whose correctness of life was unimpeachable; who were not only

* Queens of England, vol. iii. (late edit.)

† Mary and Philip were second cousins "at her mother's side." Philip was a widower at the time of his marriage with Mary Tudor, and the father of the noted Don Carlos, about whom English writers have circulated so many absurd narratives.

ladies of approved virtue, but ready to do battle, if any audacious offender essayed acts of indecorum. Of this praiseworthy spirit, the beautiful Lady Magdaleine Dacre afforded a signal instance. One day, as she was at her toilette, King Philip, who had observed a small window which lighted her dressing-room, from a corridor at Hampton Court Palace, contrived to open it far enough to put in his arm; when the fair maid of honour, indignant at a liberty she never encouraged, took up a staff which stood near, and gave the intruding arm so sound a rap that Philip was glad to draw it back in a hurry, and to make a speedy retreat. He took no offence at this specimen of an English lady's spirit, but was ever afterwards observed to treat the heroine of the staff with remarkable deference. This young lady was of so stately a presence, that she towered above all the ladies of the Court in height.* She was subsequently maid of honour to Queen Elizabeth,† and at a later period married Lord Montague, the faithful friend of Queen Mary. The father of Lady Magdaleine had been a formidable chief of the Northern Border in the reign of Henry VIII., and sometimes told his royal master truths that no one else dared speak. On one occasion he

* Latin Life of Lady Magdaleine Dacre.

† About forty years previous to the time of the above incidents, there lived another Lady Magdaleine Dacre, who accompanied the Princess Mary, sister of Henry VIII., to France, on the occasion of the Princess's marriage with Louis XII. The old French monarch quarrelled with his beautiful young bride as to the number of her maids of honour. A scene took place between the King and the "English beauties," in which Lady Magdaleine Dacre and little Nan de Boleyn were the most noted in "rating" the monarch for his parsimony. If the reader has not read the first vol. of this work, I refer him to the chapter headed "*La Reine Blanche*," pp. 127-129, for a lively and a novel scene between King Louis and the English maids of honour.

said, "your Highness will find when too late, that a man has small chance of peace, let his rank be what it may, who has more than *one* wife, and more than *one* faith in his heart. Remember, my words will prove true."

It is a curious historical fact, that at the time of Queen Mary's accession to the English throne there were eight young ladies living who were of "royal blood," and according to the old law of Legitimacy, "in order of succession," from Henry VIII.'s two sisters—Margaret and Mary. Two of the ladies in question perished upon the scaffold, and the remainder suffered imprisonment and malicious persecution at the hands of Queen Elizabeth.

Apart from all factious considerations at this time, the English nation had a strong objection to a female Sovereign. If they did not style their monarchs as the Hungarians did theirs, "King Mary;" the English Council and Parliament insisted on their Queen being "dressed with long spurs, and a formidable looking sword." This arrangement did not meet with the approval of the out-spoken women of London; but, nevertheless, they felt proud of having in the midst of them a "Queen Regnant," who would sooner or later grant extensive privileges to her own sex.* Shortly before her death, Queen Mary granted some privileges to the women of London, which were withdrawn by her successor. Elizabeth did not approve of giving her own sex many advantages over "their masters."

* Bacardo's Life of Queen Mary; Queens of England, vol. v. (first edit.).

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE MISSION OF CARDINAL POLE.

OF Pole's reception in Paris, when on his route to England, we have an account in a private despatch of Dr. Watton to Queen Mary.* The people of France, hearing that the newly created English Cardinal had come on a mission of peace, hailed him with enthusiasm, as he passed through the towns and cities of the "Premier Kingdom." The people came forth in crowds to meet him, and the women and children strewed flowers on his path. The clergy and the religious orders advanced in grand procession to welcome the Legate to Paris. Henry II. and Catharine de Medicis hesitated as to the reception they would give him.† Catharine de Medicis could not disentangle herself from the political intrigues with which she was always surrounded. After a fortnight's delay, Pole was admitted to an interview with the King and Queen, when his reception "was very flattering," as stated. The Spanish marriage was by no means agreeable to the French Sovereign. Upon this subject Pole remained silent. In fact he failed in his attempt, as in all his diplomacy, to mediate between the Emperor Charles and the French monarch. The Legate took leave of Henry II. and

* State Papers (foreign) of Mary's reign.

† Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. viii. p. 227.

his Queen with a profusion of compliments and good wishes, which, coming from the lips of such a man as King Henry II. of France, meant nothing friendly; whilst Catharine de Medicis was true to her nature—treacherous and false—a malign and fearful woman. So the struggle for Catholicity in England had little to expect from the politicians of the French Court, who did so much to promote rebellion and discontent amongst Queen Mary's subjects.

Vast crowds attended Cardinal Pole from Dover to Canterbury. In the procession there were nearly two thousand gentlemen on horseback.

The reception given to the Cardinal, on the part of the Queen, King Philip, the nobles, and the laity, was most respectful, but there was no enthusiasm from the people of London on the occasion of the arrival of Cardinal Campeggio in the reign of Henry VIII. The nation was now divided upon the question of religion, and, sad to think, all parties seemed to look upon "persecution of conscience" as a natural adjunct to the practice of a pure Gospel. The Legate could not agree with either party—a dissidence which formed one of the causes of his unpopularity.

Whilst Pole was detained in Flanders, by the political intrigues and jealousy of Charles V., a correspondence took place between the Cardinal and Philip, then married to Queen Mary. I select one of those letters, which are all more or less difficult to understand, the style varying so much. "Considering the time the letter was written," observes one of the distinguished biographers of Pole, "I regard it as a piece of pleasantry, though mildly sarcastic."

"It is just a year since Reginald Pole knocked at the door of

Philip's house. If Philip were to say 'Who's there?' the answer might be, 'One who for twenty years had been exiled from his home and country, to prevent her from being excluded from her home, whose home is now shared by Philip.' If as such a one were to demand admittance, he might expect the door to be opened to him. But it was not as a private man that he stood there; he was knocking as the representative of the successor of St. Peter; yet, strange to say, while the ambassadors from every other realm are freely admitted, the ambassador of the first among the kings and pastors upon earth is *waiting still at the outside*. Nay, he might represent himself as the ambassador of St. Peter himself. Yes, Peter himself is knocking, knocking at Mary's house, and Mary all the while has not caused the door to be opened to Peter. There was a time, mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles, when Peter having escaped the violence of Herod, knocked at Mary's door. When he knocked, and when Rhoda knew who it was that knocked, she did not indeed immediately open the door, she was so overwhelmed with joy that for a short season she left Peter outside, in order that she might bring the joyful news to Mary; then Mary came, and disregarding the dangers, though Herod was still alive, she, and all with her, opened the door, full of admiration at the Divine power by which Peter had been rescued. What hinders the royal Mary from acting in this manner? She rejoices in knowing that Peter is rescued from Herod, but she fears. Why should she fear, when Herod is *now* dead? * She was permitted for a time to fear, because, in the councils of God it was determined that the chosen son of the Church, her husband, should share with her the joy of opening."

"Pole then calls upon Philip to inspire her (Mary), with confidence, that her perfect love might cast out fear, for—rising to a higher climax—he remarks that it is not merely Peter, it is Christ Himself who knocks. 'Christ,' he continued, 'stood without, until she who is styled the Defender of the Faith, shall, in the person of the Legate, admit the Author and Finisher of Faith, for rejecting whom the King and Queen would both be called to a fearful account.'†

* Henry VIII, the deadly enemy of Pole.

† The original of this letter was written in Latin, and given in full by
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A strange document this ; but many dignified men of the time clothed serious matters in verbiage which they deemed humorous. Gardyner and Renaud were too practical to deal in apologue, and never could agree on political points with the earnest, unbending, and fanciful Legate.

Upon returning to England Pole had a dread of being assassinated by the Anabaptists.* Whilst in France and Italy, during the reign of Henry VIII., a similar feeling haunted him. "It was hinted in Rome," writes Pierre Caridello, "that the Lord Crumwell, at the instigation of King Henry, employed an assassin to despatch the hated Reginald Pole, but the affair ended in the unlooked-for death of the assassin himself."

It is a notorious fact, that Henry had long thirsted for his cousin Reginald's blood, and there is every probability of the truth of the above narrative. It is now proved that both the monarch and his Ministers were capable of any act of wickedness.

I may be censured again by the "living admirers" of Henry Tudor, for the terrible indictment I have preferred against him ; but I refer those eccentric admirers of the tyrant to a preceding chapter—"The Masks Removed"—where I produce the most authentic evidence to connect Henry VIII. and his Council with the plots devised for the assassination of Cardinal Beaton.

Quirini, in vol. iv. of his work upon Pole. Quirini did not live to complete the fifth volume of his work: this task was carried on by the learned Floribello. I may here add, that the reader will find in Granville's *Papiers d'Etat*, vol. iv. pp. 233-4, a summary of Cardinal Pole's important instructions from Julian III. There has been much useless discussion as to what those instructions were really meant to convey.

* Despatch of Simon Renaud to Charles V., on the "delays and danger of the times."

"Historians are divided," writes Lingard, "with respect to the part which Cardinal Pole acted during the horrors of Mary's reign. Most are willing to acquit him entirely; a few, judging from the influence which he was supposed to possess, have attached to him a considerable share of censure."

Those who wished to enter upon a crusade of persecution against the Reformers, complained bitterly of the moderation of Pole, which they intimated to be a proof of concealed heresy. Cardinal Pole was condemned by some prelates amongst them—men of the school of Bonner. Pole, however, held the pastoral staff with a firm hand, and sent a message to Bonner which was not flattering.*

Lingard and Hook view the policy of Cardinal Pole from a different point of view. Dean Hook remarks that "Historians concur in stating, that, in opposition to Gardiner, Pole recommended mild measures, not because he thought, what nobody at the time did think, that heresy might not be suppressed by recourse to capital punishment, but because, judging by his own temperament, he was convinced that the easiest as well as the most legitimate course was to proceed through the 'arts' of persecution." "I will," observes Dean Hook, quote the words of Burnet:—

"The Cardinal professing himself an enemy to extreme proceedings, observed that 'Pastors ought to have bowels, even to their straying sheep; bishops were fathers, and ought to look on those that erred as their sick children, and not for that to kill them.

* Cardinal Pole's correspondence with Dr. Bonner is still extant.

He had seen that severe proceedings did rather inflame than cure disease; there was a great difference to be made between a nation uninfected, where some few teachers come to spread errors, and a nation that had been over-run with them, both clergy and laity. The people were not so violently to be drawn back, but were to have time given them to recover out of those errors into which they had been led by the compliance and writings of their prelates. Therefore he (Pole) proposed that there should be a more strict discipline of the clergy.’”

Cardinal Pole was earnestly in favour of conciliation. In fact, he entertained a horror of the persecuting spirit attributed to him. He desired to revive some of the rules of discipline practised in the Primitive Church. The secular clergy did not approve of this policy. Perhaps it was unsuited to the age.

Pole's letter to Cranmer is a powerful document, but full of the most bitter invective, and unworthy of a man to whom so many amiable attributes are accredited. He seems to have had an abhorrence of the actions of Henry VIII. during the last twenty years of his reign; and in return, I again remark that if there were one man in England for whose blood Henry VIII. thirsted, that man was Reginald Pole.

Here is a passage from the Legate's letter to Cranmer: —“ If he (Pole) were acting as a private person, and not as the Legate of the Vicar of Jesus Christ, it *would be his duty to call upon God for fire from Heaven to consume the criminal prelate.*” To justify the severity of this

* Burnet. vol. ii. p. 479; Collier, vol. vi. p. 101; Ranck, vol. i. pp. 211-223.

language, Pole accuses Cranmer of having "*perverted the mind of a zealous and good prince like Henry VIII.*"*

It is absurd, and opposed to all facts, to assert that Cranmer corrupted Henry's mind. That Cranmer was a powerful agent of the King in his career of evil-doing is beyond question; but, at the same time, I beg to call the reader's attention to another fact—namely, that when Henry was only twenty-one years old, his morals were hopelessly shipwrecked; his hypocrisy as to morality and religious sentiment complete; and even then Elizabeth Blount, Adela Ramsay, and the Boleyns had not come on the scene.† The Cambridge student, afterwards known as Dr. Cranmer, was pursuing his studies in a solitary whitewashed chamber in Jesus College, Cambridge, little dreaming of the part he was to take in the terrible future, whilst his subsequent royal patron had, long before he met him, graduated in a career of profuse and unbridled profligacy.

A curious letter of Pole's is to be seen at the present moment amongst the Simancas State Papers, in which Reginald actually proposed *himself* as a suitor for the Princess Mary.‡ He was not, however, in "priest's orders"

* The original letter of Pole to Cranmer was written in Latin; it is in a very unfinished style, and is to be seen at the British Museum. Another copy of it, translated into French by Le Grand, was in the Imperial Library in Paris, about sixty years ago. In Strype's *Cranmer*, vol. ii. p. 972, is printed an English (old spelling, &c.) version of this injudicious correspondence.

† In the chapter upon the Royal Scruples, in the first volume of this work (p. 177), the reader will find a well-authenticated account of Henry's married life when only one-and twenty years of age.

‡ This fact is stated on the high authority of the late Gustave Adolph Bergenroth, in a letter to Mr. Duffus Hardy, of the Record Office. Dean Hook, in vol. viii. p. 230, of the *Archbishops of Canterbury* alludes to this curious incident, which later research in Spain has proved to be correct.

for seven years later. It is probable that the powerful party who were opposed to the Spanish marriage might have favoured such a union at an earlier period. The reader is aware Queen Mary had made "a vow before the altar" that she would marry no man but Prince Philip. So she rejected all other suitors, and became the wife of a Prince twelve years her junior, with what results she soon had bitter experience.

In the third volume I shall return to Cardinal Pole's "Mission," and its results.

CHAPTER XXXV.

DR. GARDYNER'S GOVERNMENT.

STEPHEN GARDYNER, Bishop of Winchester, was a prudent, able, and zealous Minister of the Crown. He understood every department of Government. Upon the accession of Queen Mary the monetary system of the State was in a sad condition owing to the debased coinage issued in the reigns of Henry VIII. and his son Edward. One of the first public actions of Gardyner, as a Minister, was to have a careful revision of the coin of the realm, and in a few months he issued a new coinage of gold, silver, and copper, of "fair and legitimate weight." For this action he received both the thanks of his countrymen, and of those foreign commercial communities with which England had intercourse. Early in life, Henry VIII. remarked that "young Stephen" would be an able statesman in after years. This opinion was formed by an excellent judge of "business men." Gardyner received his early training as a politician under his royal master, Wolsey, and Sir Thomas Boleyn. In course of time, Gardyner became the most respected of the English ambassadors who had theretofore been sent to France; and in the Home Government he was a most valuable Minister, although little is recorded of his labours. As a

political adviser to Queen Mary, Gardyner was vastly superior to Cardinal Pole, who knew little of the people, or the country's resources, owing, perhaps, to his many years' absence. Gardyner was a thorough Englishman; besides, he well understood the blunt, honest feelings of his countrymen. When the Spanish marriage was first spoken of, he "politely" expressed his indignation at such a union. His opposition to the marriage made him extremely popular. Both Catholics and Reformers postponed their sectarian quarrels, and joined in reprobating the projected alliance. The Queen, however, like a true Tudor, would have her own way; so she informed her Chancellor that she had made a vow before the altar that she would marry Don Philip. Gardyner persevered in his opposition, but was soon outvoted in the Council; so he adapted himself to the "situation," and commenced making preparations for the marriage of his Sovereign.

Upon the accession of Queen Mary, Gardyner wrote a brief work, entitled "*Palinodia Dieta Liberi*," which sadly indicated the freedom of a timid soul—the liberation from former enslavement of superior thought under the gross despotism over the mind of the last years of Henry's reign. Gardyner recommended this work to Hooper for perusal, when Hooper stood before him charged with "perjury and heresy."

Tempora mutant; but not so did the political and argumentative Hooper, who rejected the propositions of his censor and judge, referring him to the days when both "pledged themselves in the Oath of Supremacy to King Henry." "I did not think," said Hooper, "that the author of '*De Vera Obedientiâ*' could be so inconsistent." Yet Hooper was not unsophisticated. He had himself been as inconsistent as

Gardyner; but he retained the changeless courage of his anti-Papalism, and also manifested himself a braver and honester man than any of his episcopal brethren, for he proved himself honest, if obstinate, a loyal subject and active friend of Queen Mary. His fate was a sad one; but his Queen had far less power to control it than the present monarch of England has "to say or do" with the disposal of any one accused within her widespread dominions. Queen Mary was dominated by a Council who adapted themselves to all conditions but that of adversity, and, like loaded dice, were ever in the winning position. This Council controlled the Queen, swayed Gardyner, and intimidated Bonner, by Statutes passed in Henry's reign and the brief succeeding rule of an oligarchic faction during Edward's quasi-kingship. The most advantageous deduction to be drawn from this epoch is, that the connection of clerics with State affairs had a sadly injurious effect on the interest of religion, and ultimately upon the social condition of the people.

Many "Hot-gospellers," and proximately subsequent chapmen in historic wares, grievously impugned the humanity of Gardyner; but later writers have adopted a more moderate and veritable tone. Later still, researches in State Papers and genuine records potently qualify, as to these matters, the verdict to be passed by the present and the future. It is just here to present intermediate evidence, gathered from high and truthful sources. Sir James Mackintosh states that "Gardyner and the majority of the Papal bishops were undoubtedly opposed to the persecution of Reformers." Dean Maitland, whose great research and stern impartiality command respectful attention,

believes "that Gardyner has been *misrepresented and belied*." His memory has been consigned to a sectarian pillory by an unreflecting posterity.

Dean Hook remarks on the attempt made to attribute the politico-religious persecutions to Gardyner and Bonner. "When we examine," writes the Dean, "the facts of history, instead of relying on the statements of partisans, we must come to the conclusion that this is incorrect with regard to Gardyner; and, coarse and unfeeling as Bonner was, even with respect to him it is only partially true.*. . . When Dr. Gardyner was at the zenith of his power in 1553-4, and in the last year of his life, *fewer were burnt than at any other period* of Queen Mary's reign."† Peter Martyr and John Sturmius, both "Hot-gospel" preachers, and not likely to think well of the Queen's "Popish Chancellor," as Gardyner was styled, bear testimony to the humane and kindly treatment they received from Dr. Gardyner. Hadrian Junius, the physician of Edward VI., speaks in grateful terms of the Bishop of Winchester. "He was," says the Anabaptist doctor, "the very opposite of a bad man." Roger Ascham,

* The cases generally tried before Bishop Bonner came under the statute of Henry VIII., for the punishment of "relapsed heretics, on whom the law had no mercy." This statute is supposed to have been suggested by the King, and drawn up by Audley and Cranmer. There were two courses open to Bonner, either to administer the law, as any informer might demand, or to resign his office. As a priest he was bound not alone to retire from those horrible scenes, but to protest, in the name of the Catholic Church, against such an outrage upon its divine principles. I here take the opportunity of correcting an accidental mistake with regard to Bonner being a student of Cambridge. It occurs in Chapter I. p. 4 of this volume. Bonner resided for some time with his relatives at the famous Dolphin Inn, where he became acquainted with many of the Cambridge students. He was styled the "noisy boy." Bonner was a student of Oxford, where he entered in 1512, and became a distinguished scholar.

† *Archbishops of Canterbury*, vol. vii. p. 306.

another earnest upholder of the Reformation, has left on record an interesting relation of Gardyner's "kindly consideration for men of learning, in which he was never swayed by religious or party considerations." Several other "Reformers" and writers for "Reform," might be cited in Dr. Gardyner's favour to prove that he never acted in that spirit of malicious sectarian hatred which characterized Cranmer and Somerset's party in Edward's reign. It must be remembered, too, that Gardyner was a loyal subject to the Crown and the constitution of the realm, whilst Cranmer and the members of Edward's Government may be styled, according to the letter of the law, rebels, and that, under circumstances which honour and chivalry stigmatize as odious. The records of the times—the true basis of History—establish these statements as "facts."

Before his death Dr. Gardyner became "a wiser and a sadder man." In one of his last Sermons at St. Paul's Cross he deplored his conduct in Henry's reign.*

In his "English Chancellors" Lord Campbell inserts, on the authority of Sir William Cecil, a statistical table of executions or "sacrifices at the stake" in the reign of Queen Mary. Those said statistics show favourably for Gardyner, the "Keeper of the Queen's conscience," as tradition has brought it down even to our day.† If Mary were the demon represented by Puritan and other unfaithful writers, Gardyner was not the man to infuse diabolical notions into the royal sensorium: on the contrary, when the naturally kind heart of a helpless monarch, born to a perilous sceptre, inclined to mercy—which her own innate nature always did—

* See Polini, vol. v. pp. 293, 300.

† Lord Campbell's *English Chancellors*, vol. ii. p. 75.

her Chancellor was ever to be found on the side of humanity and clemency.*

There are now strong doubts as to whether Gardyner ever sent any persons to the stake. Here is an evidence to that effect. When that prelate (Gardyner) was obliged to go to Paris on "a private mission" for the Queen, the Marquis of Winchester†—a noted political character in those times—was appointed as *locum tenens* to the Chancellor. Winchester, like his friend Dean Wotton, boasted of belonging to "both Gospels," and being always desirous of notoriety, he tested the sincerity of some fanatics by sending them to the stake. Upon Gardyner's return to England he strongly condemned the action of Winchester, and sent a special note to the Queen's Council, stating that he "*would not obey any order that might be issued to him for burning heretics in his diocese.*"

Strype, Burnet, and Hallam have published this incident in their partial pages; and Dean Hook, writing so far later, comments on this merciful feature in Gardyner's misrepresented character.‡

Will it not sound novel to the essayists on the reign of a Sovereign so traduced as has been Mary Tudor, that there exists a wondrous contrast between the action of Stephen Gardyner, the "Romanist Chancellor" and Thomas

* Thorndale's Memorials of Dr. Gardyner; Tytler's Edward and Mary, vol. ii.; Hayne's State Papers.

† The Marquis of Winchester was a member of the Council who had sworn allegiance to Lady Jane Dudley, whom he abandoned within ten days. His subsequent conduct to the unfortunate lady was unprecedented for baseness. In the third volume I will enter more into the details of the history of this noted Reformer who never reformed himself.

‡ Archbishops of Canterbury, vol. viii. p. 242.

Cranmer, the Protean religionist, in the adjudication of "heretical trials?" I call special attention to the case of Anne Boucher. The heart of King Edward yearned to set free the young and beautiful fanatic, whose appearance in the justice hall excited the sympathy and compassion of every man who was present save *one*. The stern word and persistent vengeance for the too true words spoken by her, of Cranmer, sealed her fate, after a year's hesitation on the part of Edward. I refer the reader to page 315 in this volume for the confirmation of my contrast between two men—one of whom has been utterly consigned to historic perdition, whilst the less worthy—indeed, wholly unworthy—has been deified by ignorant or party writers. But truth, it cannot be too often repeated, must vindicate herself in the annals of the nation, as in other matters; and we shall hear less of "saints" and "martyrs," when, with unprejudiced discernment, the people will insist on veracity in their historical teachers. To those who descant upon the *autos da fé* of Smithfield, in wild condemnation of Papists, who, in the whole mass, abhorred such political, bigoted, or revengeful cruelties, it may be of some utility, in the interest of verity and equity—not to speak of kindness of heart and considerateness of speech—to call upon them to remember that it was not Stephen Gardyner, nor that "awful Bonner," so marvellously belied by Foxe—nor any man obeying the posthumous law of a despot, as was the case in Mary's reign—but the autocratic monitor and "councillor" of a sickly boy, who insisted upon sending to the fire an English lady for expressing that which he himself secretly favoured. Did Cranmer burn this lady from personal revenge, because she "told him a bit of her mind," as some members of the

gentler sex must fain do, under certain circumstances, or did he burn her for *heresy*? I would like replies to these two queries from those who deny that Archbishop Cranmer ever persecuted on religious grounds.

Inconsistency was a leading feature in the statecraft of the day. Gardyner, as a Politician and as a Churchman, held different opinions as to the Papacy. Notwithstanding Queen Mary's high opinion of Cardinal Pole she did not act upon his advice in many important State affairs. The Queen was assured by Dr. Gardyner that the "reconciliation of the Kingdom to the See of Rome was pushed too fast by Pole."* It is now proved by the State Records that Gardyner desired to win back the country by gentle means, and that the experiment should be a matter of time. Yet Gardyner is described as a persecutor of conscience at the very period he held this policy.

John Strype and Dean Hook concur in opinion as to the high character Dr. Gardyner held as a cleric, "always active and zealous in the performance of his duties as a Churchman; and munificent and thoughtful in his charities."

Dr. Gardyner, when released from the Tower after his long incarceration, was in a declining state of health; nevertheless he worked with immense energy to uphold the Queen's government, under the most unprecedented circumstances, for two years and three months. Having been taken seriously ill in the House of Lords, he was removed to his Palace near Bermondsey, where, after three weeks' suffering

* Collier's Ecclesiastical History, vol. vi. p. 34.

he expired. He was buried with great public honours, in the Cathedral of Winchester.*

I have been censured by some clerics, and by Catholic reviewers also, for "the severity" of my observations with regard to Queen Mary's Chancellor—Dr. Gardyner. Have my censors ever read Gardyner's "*De Vera Obedientiâ*"? Here is an extract which will probably arouse the indignation even of my critics :

"The question is now in everybody's mouth, whether the consent of the universal people of England rests on *divine right* by which they declare and regard their illustrious King, Henry VIII., to be the *supreme head on earth of the English Church*; and by the *free vote of this Parliament*, have invited him to use his right, and call himself *Head of the English Church, in name, as he is in fact*. . . . *No new thing was introduced*; only they determined that a power which, of *Divine right belongs to their prince*, should be more clearly asserted by adopting a more significant expression; and so much the rather in order to remove the cloud from the eyes of the vulgar, with which the *falsely pretended power of the Bishop of Rome has now for some ages overshadowed them*."

Most readers of various creeds seem to have been, until recently, uninformed as to the character and policy of Dr. Gardyner in the reign of Henry VIII. In that reign he had been the unrelenting and persistent enemy of Queen Mary's mother; and this course of his must have been confirmed and sustained by the concurrence of the majority of the English bishops and of the secular clergy—the dissidents being men like the venerable Dr. Fisher, the illustrious More, and the great body of the Regular Clergy. Gardyner, to the "great comfort" of the King and of Archbishop Cranmer, produced the work called "*De Vera Obedientiâ*,"

* State Papers of Queen Mary's reign.

at an opportune moment, when the King's supremacy "mania" required such aid. Yet, with the remorseful versatility of the age, when the writer of "True Obedience" was cast into prison by Somerset and Cranmer, in the next brief and miserable reign, he made a plenary retraction of that which he had so recently presented as the truth. The anti-Catholic party and Puritan writers have not done "justice" (I use the word in its relative sense) to the memory of Gardyner in traducing him, for he was one of the many instruments in promoting the Reformation. But then, as in the case of far better men, those who vilified him did not understand him, and have unconsciously abused the best unacknowledged though positive agent of their wishes and their cause. Thanks to Somerset and Cranmer having imprisoned Gardyner on the assumption that he had notions of religion dissimilar to their own, he emerged as a martyr from his incarceration, winning the sympathy of the people, and even of the Queen, whose mother he had so deeply wronged. Still there were some fair traits of goodness in the after-life of Dr. Gardyner. He remembered, perhaps, that historic princess, unconquered even in her isolation, whom he had aided in dissevering from her lord; but, better far, he may have repented of that mistake, and having suffered from conscience' sake, at the hands of Somerset and his Council, he won the halo of a "martyr" under the new *régime*.

I cannot close this volume without again recurring to the reigns of Henry VIII. and his son Edward. The reign of Henry VIII. and Edward VI. furnished many most unhappy precedents for religious persecution in its worst form. The religious persecution in Edward's reign

was the exclusive work of the Reformers, *privately arranged* during Henry's long illness; it was not called forth by any spirit of retaliation—none whatever, for the men who proclaimed the "new order of things" professed to belong to the olden creed up to the moment of the King's death. The reader should not forget this fact, for it has a decided effect upon the moral bearing of the case. Lord Rich, for instance, was one of the lawyers who arranged the transfer of the Crown from Henry's daughter to Jane Dudley, and swore allegiance to her as the Queen Regnant of England; yet, within ten days, Rich deserted Jane's standard, appeared before the new Queen, and gave to her the homage of a "loyal subject." He professed Protestant principles during the reign of Edward. Now, however, he "returned to the creed of his fathers." Lord Rich was nominated one of the twenty-five peers who sat in judgment upon *his* friend Northumberland, and pronounced him guilty of high treason. What honest action could Catholic or Protestant expect from such a being? Such men as Rich, Winchester, Paget, and Pembroke, are the persons justly responsible for the actions which brought disrepute upon the reign of Queen Mary.

When the priceless State Papers bearing upon the reign of Edward VI. and Queen Mary, deposited amongst the ancient official records of Venice,* have been all discovered, and

* Mr. Rawdon Brown's Venetian State Papers contain a mass of most valuable correspondence bearing upon the history of this country under the Tudor dynasty. There are, however, still extant, a number of strange documents in the "strong boxes" of the descendants of those eminent diplomatists, who were the Envoys of the Republic in England during the 16th century. It is positively affirmed that the "true story" concerning the conspiracy which sent Anna Boleyn to the scaffold is to be found in the archives of St. Mark's, at Venice. The Venetian Envoys were all men of the most

calendared by some students of history who love Truth beyond literary notoriety or gain, then, perhaps, posterity will view Stephen Gardyner and his royal mistress in a different light from that in which they have been represented up to the present by writers whose aim has been the gratification of "party feeling," or the profits of literary speculation. Let us, then, hope that the time is not far distant when the Historical Literature of this country will stand forth without reproach ; and that English writers will commence a chivalrous rivalry in the honourable and beneficent work of disentombing the true history of the noblest and the greatest nation on the globe.

observant and intellectual character ; and their correspondence with the Doge was a minute and critical examination of English life, social and political. I must observe, in conclusion, that the students of English History are much indebted to Mr. Rawdon Brown for the eminent services he has rendered to the progress of historical research, by his calendaring of the section of Venetian State Papers confided to his charge. I may here remark, that the destruction of Dr. Gardyner's most valuable library at Southwark—the work of Wyatt's followers—has left the students of history without many priceless papers bearing upon the history of the divorce of Queen Katharina. Gardyner was, if possible, better acquainted with those transactions than Cranmer, because he was the early personal friend of the Boleyn family. Unfortunate Lord Percy corresponded with Gardyner "concerning Anna Boleyn." Percy's romantic letters have not appeared, as yet.

END OF VOL. II.

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